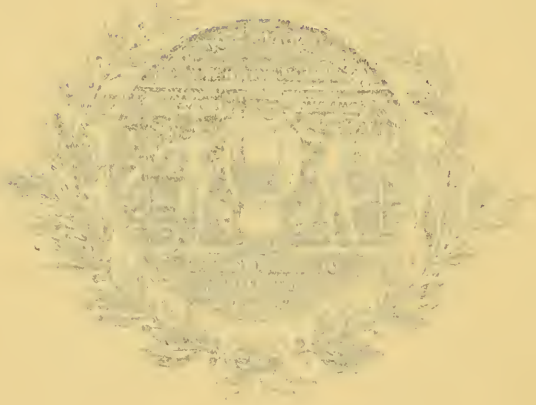
Adams 221-18



Presented by the Author to John Adams.

Vindiciæ Prieſtleianæ:

AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

STUDENTS

OF

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE;

OCCASIONED BY

A LETTER to Dr. PRIESTLEY from a Perſon calling himſelf an UNDERGRADUATE, but publicly and uncontradictedly aſcribed to Dr. HORNE, Dean of Canterbury, and Preſident of Magdalen College, Oxford.

BY THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, A.M.
FORMERLY FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Opinionum commenta delet dies: naturæ, deique, *judicia confirmat.*
CICERO.

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ADAMS 2-2/.18

THE PREFACE.

THE idea of drawing up the following tract firſt aroſe from obſerving a ſtudied affectation in many perſons of treating Dr. Prieſtley's theological and metaphyſical writings with ſlight and contempt, and an endeavour in others particularly to infuſe the like ſentiments of him into the riſing generation: which laſt I could not but look upon as of pernicious conſequence, tending to prevent their acquaintance with a writer, from whoſe various works, above thoſe of any other in our own country, they might reap the greateſt advantage both in reſpect of uſeful knowlege and virtuous improvement.

I had no view therein, was I capable of it, of lending him any aid againſt the attacks made upon him, as if he were in danger of being overpowered by his opponents. For he is more than equal to a whole hoſt of them: which they have all experienced in their turns; biſhop Horſely, one of the moſt violent of them, the leaſt of all excepted. But I thought it might be poſſible for another to ſuggeſt ſome circumſtances, and to ſay certain things in his behalf, which he would never think of offering, and which indeed could not ſo properly come from himſelf; by which the edge of prejudice might be taken off, and a juſter eſtimate formed of him and his writings.

I am not however without hope, that I may be able to produce ſomething in confirmation of thoſe very important points, which he has been called out to defend. And if I ſhould not ſee others exactly in the ſame light with him, it will cauſe no breach or coolneſs in our friendſhip. For although he has no high opinion of Plato, as a metaphyſician, or theologian, he will approve

approve the good ſenſe of that apology of his for giving up his favourite Homer, *de Rep. l.* x. Καιτοι φιλια γε τις με και αιδως εκ παιδος εχουσα περι ομηρου αποκωλυει λεγειν· ———, αλλ' ὁ γουν προ γε της αληθειας τιμητεος ανηρ.

I am miſtaken, if many will not be ſurpriſed at a very *recent fact*, but little known, which I have had occaſion to mention, concerning the eccleſiaſtical authority exerciſed by the engliſh biſhops over the Americans, ſince they became independent of the civil power of this country. It will appear incredible to them, that in theſe enlightened times, the leading clergy ſhould ſeek to put the epiſcopalians upon that continent, under *harrows of iron*, and conſtrain them, as far as they could, to receive the ſpurious creed of Athanaſius, and to become ſhackled with other religious fetters, from which Tillotſon, Hoadley, Herring, &c. would have rejoiced to have delivered others, as well as to have been delivered themſelves.

Having been led to ſay ſomething concerning *the hiſtory of the fall*, I have ſpoken

without reſerve, and I truſt, not without ſome proof alleged, as much as I had room for, of the non-exiſtence of ſuch evil beings, as *the devil*, *ſatan*, and *demons* without end, mentioned in the ſcriptures. I have been informed that the apparent *(a)* letting looſe as it were of ſo many of theſe laſt, at the firſt preaching of the goſpel, was one of the principal things that contributed to make the ingenious *Rouſſeau* an unbeliever; as it ſeemed to him, with good reaſon, a thing quite out of nature, and probability. But a proper inquiry, and inveſtigation would have ſhewn him, that

(a) One is ſurprized that the learned *Jortin*, ſhould have paid ſo little attention to this ſubject, and to what Mede and Sykes had remarked upon it, (for Lardner and Farmer had not then publiſhed their ſentiments) as to fall into this ſtrange notion of demons having a greater licenſe than uſual to afflict mankind, in the age of the apoſtles. 'One reaſon, ſays he, 'for which the divine providence ſhould ſuffer ſpirits 'to exert their malignant powers ſo much at that time, might 'be to give a check to Sadduceiſm among the jews, and to 'epicurean atheiſm among the gentiles, and to remove in 'ſome meaſure theſe two impediments to the goſpel.' Rem. on Eccl. Hiſt. vol. i. p. 14. We may venture to pronounce, that no ſudducee, or epicurean atheiſt, was ever converted by ſuch *inſtrumentality*, and argument.

that there was no *phenomenon* of the kind at that time more than at any other; and that theſe things being mentioned by the ſacred writers is no proof of their reality. They expreſſed themſelves on theſe matters agreeably to the ſuperſtition of the times and their own prejudices. And ſo far is their repreſentation of things, however miſtaken therein, from invalidating the ſacred hiſtory, that it is a proof of its antiquity, and genuineneſs.

It would be no difficult taſk, by a few remarks interſperſed, and illuſtrations of the ſeveral paſſages of the bible, where the word *Satan*, &c. is named, to enable the commoneſt reader to ſee, that divine revelation gives no countenance to the exiſtence of any ſuch evil beings, or to any power but that of our benevolent creator being exerciſed over us. And I hope this will be conſidered, among many other things, in a new verſion of the bible, whenever it is undertaken without reſpect to any great churches, or parties in religion.

Some little merit I will take to myſelf in one thing, becauſe it is not my own, and I am merely concerned in it as a tranſlator; *viz.* in having produced to light the MS. of

Caſtellio's, publiſhed about thirty years ſince by Wetſtein, but never noticed that I know by any one ſince, in our own or any other country. It is ſo very free, that the editor ſeemed almoſt afraid of exhibiting it, leſt he ſhould give offence; as you will obſerve from his words in the margin (*b*), with which he introduces it. And yet the diſtinction that the author makes, between the ſeveral parts of the ſcriptures, and the different account we ought to make of each, is ſo juſt and full of good ſenſe; that every judicious perſon will approve it. I would add, that this incomparable critic will

(*b*) Animus etiam erat, ad examen revocare, quæ S. Caſtellio paulo ante obitum de interpretatione ſcripturæ in chartas conjecerat; cum vero nec libri ad manum ſint de arte hermeneutica ſcripti, quos cum ſyſtemate MS. conferrem, nec tantum otii nunc habeam, malui aliorum prius judicia experiri qui etiamſi forte aliter ſentiant atque clariſſimus ille ſcripturæ interpres, non ægre tamen ferent, ſpero, quæ cogitate meditatus eſt, a ſitu et interitu vindicata, ſecum communicari. Saltem quod ad me attinet, malim legere ſcriptum viri docti et pii, meæ ſententiæ oppoſitum, quam ſcriptum hominis mali et indocti pro mea ſententia editum. A tali adverſario ſemper aliquod diſcimus, &c. Wetſtein. N. T. vol. ii. p. 884.

will ſatisfy any one that is unprejudiced, that even greater liberties may be taken than Dr. Prieſtley or others have done, with relation to the characters and imperfect reaſonings in the ſcriptures, without hurting the evidence for the facts of the New Teſtament, or weakening the foundation of our faith, which reſts on the well authenticated miracles of Chriſt and his apoſtles, and his reſurrection from the dead.

Of the late *biſhop Butler* I had ſome little perſonal knowlege, not long before he was raiſed to the ſee of Durham; but had an opportunity of knowing more of his character from a correſpondence, which he had long kept up with a friend he highly reſpected, and to whom he communicated himſelf very freely. He had great piety, but it was of a gloomy caſt, and tending to ſuperſtition; which he might have caught from reading the lives of romiſh ſaints, ſome of which I was the means of handing to him. He always appeared diſſatisfied with the public ſtate of things and of the world; which might originate from his views of divine providence,

providence, that in his ſyſtem could certainly afford but little chearfulneſs to thoſe who throughly imbibed it. I hope it has been ſhewn, in the following work, that the opinion much inſiſted on by him, and which raiſes the moſt melancholy ſuſpicions of the deity, *viz. that repentance alone is not ſufficient to reſtore ſinful creatures to the favour of their maker*, is as void of foundation in ſcripture, as it is contrary to all rational ſentiments of the Divine Being, and to all juſt concluſions from reaſon and fact. What a door alſo does it open to the worſt ſuperſtition, to be told that a return to ſincere piety and virtue will not ſatisfy or appeaſe the divine diſpleaſure againſt ſin? What evil is there, which the opinion of God not being in his own nature placable, hath not cauſed, both in the chriſtian and pagan worlds?

It was tedious, though neceſſary, to repeat many things before noted, by myſelf and others, to ſhew what a miſtaken interpreter of ſcripture the Dean of Canterbury is in his printed Diſcourſes; from which I have made ſome few citations. But the change, (muſt not I call it!) which he

he has made in *the object of religious worſhip*, throughout the two volumes of his commentaries on the pſalms, will to many appear to exceed all belief; in his ſolemnly, and frequently, nay almoſt intirely addreſſing prayer to Jeſus Chriſt, by name, whom he alſo ſtiles, *God*, LORD *God*, LORD *of hoſts*, *God of Iſrael*. What will the unbeliever ſay to this, done by an approved high dignitary of the church-eſtabliſhed, when he looks into our ſacred books, and finds no ſuch God there?

N. B. I have juſt now been informed, that Dr. Roſs, biſhop of Exeter, was one of the clerical aſſembly at Tenniſon's library, mentioned, p. 51. who united with others now alſo on the epiſcopal bench, to requeſt a reviſal of the articles and liturgy and forms of ſubſcription of the church; in the year 1772.

*** The ſecond propoſed part of this work, ſee p. 2. 3. is in good forwardneſs, and will in due time be laid before the public.

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jews

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TO THE

YOUNGER STUDENTS

OF THE

TWO UNIVERSITIES.

SECTION I.

Design of the work. Dr. Prieſtley's *laudable motives in addreſſing the youth of the univerſities. The real author of the letter to him under the name of an undergraduate.*

THERE cannot be a more commendable employment than to endeavour, in any degree, to form or excite the minds of youth to piety and virtue, and to aſſiſt them in their enquiries after truth; thoſe among them eſpecially, who, like you, are deſtined

to act important parts upon the theatre of the world, and who muſt, by your ſituations, do much good or much harm in it.

This I profeſs to be my aim and ambition in theſe thoughts which I have publickly addreſſed to you, reſpecting the matters in diſcuſſion between Dr. Horne and Dr. Prieſtley, in which you bear a conſiderable part; and in my farther notification of certain things, in ſome others of Dr. Horne's writings, which may miſlead you moſt eſſentially, and which you may be otherwiſe apt to take upon truſt without examination, from a deference to his authority, and known worthy character.

And from an earneſt deſire in particular to aſſiſt you in underſtanding the revelation, which we believe the Divine Being to have given of himſelf, and of his will, and moral government over the human race, to which we belong; I have been farther prompted to lay before you ſome ſamples of the only juſt method of interpreting the ſacred volume, which contains that revelation, with a large exemplification of the contrary method; and have cloſed the whole with a catalogue of the

the *falſe readings* of Scripture, which have been introduced at different times, and continued, through an undue prejudice in favour of the doctrine of the trinity and the divinity of Jeſus Chriſt; accompanied with a liſt of the *miſtranſlations* of our engliſh bible, which have ariſen from the ſame cauſe, and ſtill remain.

Wo unto you when all men ſhall ſpeak well of you, ſays our Saviour Chriſt, Luke vi. 26. to his apoſtles, who were to carry on the inſtruction and reformation of the world, after he had left it; to warn them, that a general applauſe, in their department, was not to be obtained without mean compliances, and ſoothing men in their idolatry and ſinful practices.

This *wo* aſſuredly belongs not to Dr. Prieſtley, whatever be his merits or demerits in other reſpects. His frankneſs in publiſhing the progreſs of his inquiries into the ſcriptures, and early chriſtian antiquity, and the doctrines and opinions he has drawn from thoſe ſources, oftentimes contrary to what had been eſtabliſhed and held ſacred

for ages, has excited the zeal and diſpleaſure of thoſe againſt him, who from various and different motives would have every thing relating to religion remain quiet and untouched; and of others, who unhappily ſuppoſe the ſalvation of mankind to depend upon holding certain articles of belief, which he maintains to be void of all foundation: ſo that many ſet no bounds to their evil ſpeaking, and ignorant cenſures of him.

Such however has been the lot in all ages, among their cotemporaries, of the trueſt friends and benefactors of mankind, who have ſet themſelves to oppoſe and correct popular errors, eſpecially in the things of religion. Socrates, one of the moſt virtuous of men, and a preacher of truth in his day, according to the lights given him, was accuſed of poiſoning the minds of youth. If the diſpaſſionate wiſe and good approve, the accuſations of others may be more eaſily borne. Whether any juſt cauſe of complaint or offence, has been now given, you will judge from what I ſhall offer.

Dr. now

Dr. now Bp. Horſeley, Mr. White, Mr. Howes, Dr. Horne, dean of Canterbury, and preſident of Magdalen college, Oxford, have lately appeared in print againſt our author, chiefly with an intention to confute what he has advanced concerning the divine unity, and the perſon of Chriſt. The ſtate of the argument betwixt himſelf and Dr. Horſeley, Dr. Prieſtley has mentioned in page 10, &c. of his letters to Dr. Horne; and has made ſome animadverſions on Mr. White, in his "Importance and extent of free inquiry in "matters of religion;" and in his *Defences of Unitarianiſm for the year* 1787, p. 71 to 108, hath made a full reply to the charges, which Mr. Howes hath brought againſt him.

The preſident of Magdalen maintains, that there are three divine perſons, who are each of them Gods, and equally to be worſhiped; and yet that theſe three perſons, thus diſtinctly to be invoked, are not three Gods, but one God: a doctrine, and a worſhip this, as appears from the face of the ſcriptures, and will more appear the

more accurately they are examined, wholly unknown to Moſes, and to Jeſus, and his apoſtles; and, to the philoſophic inquirer, nature's *(a)* light certainly teaches its great author and creator, GOD, to be one perſon only, one conſcious mind, one ſingle intelligent agent, wiſe and good.

After having ſhewn the inconcluſiveneſs of Dr. Horne's arguments in defence of this Trinity in Unity, as he ſtiles it from the creed aſcribed to Athanaſius, it was natural for

(a) "The plain argument for the exiſtence of the "Deity, obvious to all, and carrying irreſiſtible conviction "with it, is from the evident contrivance and fitneſs of "things for one another, which we meet with through-"out all parts of the univerſe. There is no need of nice "and ſubtle reaſonings in this matter: a manifeſt contri-"vance immediately ſuggeſts a contriver. It ſtrikes us "like a ſenſation; and artful reaſonings againſt it may "puzzle us, but it is without ſhaking our belief. No "perſon, for example, that knows the principles of op-"tics, and the ſtructure of the eye, can believe that it was "formed without ſkill in that ſcience; or that the ear was "formed without the knowlege of ſounds; or that the male "and female in animals were not formed for each other, and "for continuing the ſpecies. All our accounts of nature "are full of inſtances of this kind. The admirable and "beautiful ſtructure of things for final cauſes, exalts our "idea of the *Contriver*: the unity of deſign ſhews him to "be *One*."—*Maclaurin*'s account of Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s philoſophical diſcoveries, p. 400. 8vo.

for Dr. Prieſtley to turn his eyes to you, O ye noble, and ingenuous youth, the nation's hope, and future ornament and ſupport, I truſt! concerned and grieved at the thought, that you ſhould be conſtrained at any time, particularly at ſo early a period as ſome of you have done, to ſubſcribe and declare your belief of a doctrine ſo irreconcileable to reaſon and to ſcripture, together with that of original or birth-ſin, &c. &c. *(b)* connected with it.

From a foreſight of the difficulties, in which thoſe of you in particular, who are deſigned for ſacred orders, will probably be involved, if ever you ſhould ſearch the ſcriptures in earneſt for yourſelves, and find the daily ſervice of the church, in which you are bound to miniſter, and the articles of faith, to which your teachings are to be conformable, inconſiſtent with the convictions of your conſciences; he preſſes and

(b) A late excellent prelate, who earneſtly wiſhed for a farther reformation, and was not wanting in endeavours to promote it, was wont ſometimes in familiar converſation with friends, humourouſly to call original or birth-ſin, *the ſin of being born.*

ſolicits you, by the moſt cogent and affectionate arguments (*d*), to conſider this in time, and to take the meaſures, which might be effectual to remedy and redreſs ſo heavy a grievance.

Nor are thoſe among you, who are intended merely to diſcharge the duties and offices of civil life, unconcerned in this matter as they may imagine, ſo as to be under no obligation to take a part in it.

Next

(*c*) "Let titles of honour and dominion go, as the pro-
" vidence of God will have, yet quiet and peaceable men
" will not fail of their obedience: no more will I of aught,
" ſo be that *God* and *good conſcience* command not the con-
" trary. A higher degree of duty I do not ſee any man
" can demand at my hands: for whereas the exception of
" *good conſcience* ſounds not well with many men, becauſe
" ofttimes under that form, *pertinacy* and *wilfulneſs* is
" ſuſpected to couch itſelf; in this caſe, it concerns every
" man ſincerely to know the truth of his own heart, and
" ſo accordingly to determine of his own way, *whatſoever*
" the judgment of his *ſuperiors* be, or *whatſoever event* be-
" fall him. For ſince, in caſe of conſcience, many times
" there is a neceſſity to fall either into *the hands of men*, or
" into *the hands of God*; of theſe two, whether is the beſt,
" I leave every particular man to judge: only I will add thus
" much, it is a *fearful thing* to trifle with *conſcience*; for moſt
" aſſuredly, according unto *it*, a man ſhall ſtand or fall at
" the laſt."—Letter of Mr. *Hales* to Abp. *Laud*.

Next to officiating and adminiſtring in forms of worſhip contrary to the ſenſe of their own minds, and invoking thoſe whom they believe not to be gods, or capable of hearing and helping them; near of kin to this, and not much inferior ſurely is the fault of joining in worſhip directed to ſuch objects, and thereby giving ſanction and encouragement to it. Your firſt apprehenſions, I am perſuaded, would lead you to think that no good mind could be eaſy in ſuch a cuſtomary practice; although many ſuch there have been, and are, who can bring themſelves to be ſatisfied with it, through the force of habit, and from various reaſons, and particularly by ſuppoſing, that as the wrong part of the worſhip is not their act, they may ſafely join in the parts they approve, and have nothing to do with the others. But whether this be a conduct ſtrictly upright, and what a chriſtian ought to acquieſce in, as agreeable with his divine maſter's teachings, deſerves your matureſt conſideration.

It is not therefore impertinently, or without juſt cauſe, that Dr. Prieſtley has taken upon

upon him the office of a monitor, and, if I may be allowed ſo to ſpeak, of a tutor to you, on the preſent occaſion.

He hereby does no more than diſcharge the duty which one man owes to another, and I promiſe myſelf that I ſhall have you agreeing in ſentiment with me. But whether *another perſon*, who has condemned him ſo highly in this matter, has acted a candid and wiſe part towards him and you, we are next to examine.

Of the Undergraduate's letter to Dr. Prieſtley.

It was no unpleaſing circumſtance to obſerve in this letter, that Dr. Prieſtley's addreſs to you had gained ſome degree of attention, and was likely to gain more. Such a curious device, ſo ſpeedily put in execution, without any argument, and merely in the way of drollery, to deter you from looking into his writings, betrayed great apprehenſions leſt you might be inclined to peruſe them; eſpecially when it was by no means clear from the firſt, that the letter originated with you. For though the writer ſometimes

times paſſes himſelf off tolerably well in that reſpect as one of you, his manner of defending the cauſe he eſpouſes, diſcovers the ſtrong bias and prepoſſeſſions of an older head too much, to make the deception natural.

It ſoon began therefore to be whiſpered about, that under the humble name of undergraduate lay concealed a perſon of eminence in the univerſity, and the rumour ſoon grew into a very general perſuaſion, which no one that I can find calls in queſtion, that it was the compoſition of no leſs a perſon than the learned preſident of Magdalen college, and dean of Canterbury; who, by a very venial artifice and anachroniſm, choſe to make himſelf paſs for one of you, as he formerly had been ſuch, the better to anſwer his purpoſe. And though the tendency of his work be to ſhut you up in darkneſs, and ignorance of a ſubject of all others the moſt important, all your lives; yet I conceive him to have written from a pure deſign of ſerving you, and of promoting what he apprehends to be right. For his general character and practice beſpeak him

him a good man, and it appears very particularly from his other publications, that he is not only a ſincere believer in, but a worſhiper of Jeſus Chriſt as God Almighty, and this in an extraordinary manner, beyond many: and therefore, not to mention other ſubjects of wide difference, he muſt be greatly hurt with, and to the utmoſt of his power endeavour to turn you away from writings, whoſe aim is to prove from ſcripture, and the teſtimony of Chriſt himſelf and his apoſtles, and the general perſuaſion of chriſtians in the earlieſt ages, that our Lord was only a moſt virtuous and excellent creature, the meſſenger and prophet of the moſt high and only true God, a mortal man of the nation of the jews, and family of Abraham and David.

The doctrine embraced, and pleaded for, by Dr. Horne, being not taught in the bible, as has been often ſhewn, and will be ſeen hereafter in this work; yet being drawn in almoſt with your firſt breath (of which I may ſpeak from ſome experience) from nurſes, parents, creeds, catechiſms; inculcated daily in prayers, public and private;

vate; bound upon you afterwards by a ſubſcription to articles of faith, framed by ignorant and fallible men, by whoſe deciſions nevertheleſs you are to abide and to interpret the ſcripture itſelf by them, ſo that all avenues of free inquiry into its meaning are ſhut up: under ſuch early impreſſions and influence, it muſt have been with great pains and difficulty that any have emancipated themſelves, and come at the truth in this point.

That theſe fetters which are now in youth comparatively light upon your minds, may be taken off; and particularly, that you may be enabled to form ſome judgment purely your own, when you bend your knees in prayer, whether you are to addreſs yourſelves to *three eternal, almighty perſons*, or to *one* ſuch *perſon* only; Dr. Prieſtley directed his firſt letters to you, at the cloſe of thoſe inſcribed to the dean of Canterbury, compoſed in a ſtrain of good ſenſe, piety and benevolence, juſtly admired; and now again, at the inſtant I am writing, he has ſhewn the weakneſs of the arguments, which the ſame worthy perſon under his feigned name of

Undergraduate,

Undergraduate, had advanced, in reply to him, and in plea for your remaining under theſe chains of ſubſcription for ever. It will be my taſk to acquaint you with the defective accounts, and miſrepreſentation of many things, which this your pretended brother-undergraduate's prejudices have led him into, ſuch as I do not find noticed by Dr. Prieſtley.

SECTION II.

Subſcription to the creeds and articles of the church, a grievance long complained of. Archbp. Tillotſon's *wiſh concerning* Athanaſius's *creed. Curious hiſtory of a contrary temper in the preſent day. Of Mr.* Locke's *ſentiments. Of Dr.* Clarke's. *Of* Mr. Whiſton's. *The candid diſquiſitions. The clerical petitioners at the* Feathers. *Clerical aſſembly at* Tenniſon's *library. Of Dr.* Durell's *ſentiments. Of Bp.* Lowth's.

NOTHING is more difficult than to aſſume a character that belongs not to us, and

and act conſiſtently in it. In Dr. Horne's letter drawn up for you, we find many things at your time of life, never likely to have entered into your thoughts; particularly, the myſtic notion, p. 40, that the epiſtle to the Hebrews is a divine expoſition of the Old Teſtament. We alſo perceive not in the author, that curioſity, and ardent thirſt after and love of truth, which belong to the human mind in the early prime of life: but, what is moſt unnatural to that age, a fixed reſolution to make no inquiry into ſubjects of the higheſt moment, but to ſit down lazy and ſatisfied with what others, without any juſt pretenſions, have decided concerning them, before he was born.

By writing however in the character of a young diſputant, he has a plauſible excuſe for paſſing over a circumſtance, with which you ought by no means to be unacquainted; which is, that however he pleads for ſubſcription to creeds and articles, and will not admit the idea of any alteration or relaxation, a reformation therein has from the firſt, more particularly of late, been deſired and

and ſought for by ſome of the wiſeſt and beſt men of the nation.

To touch only upon ſome things that have fallen out within a century paſt.

Archbiſhop Tillotſon writes from Lambeth to Bp. Burnet, in 1694, upon reading his expoſition of the 39 articles:

" In the article of the Trinity, you have " ſaid all that I think can be ſaid, upon *ſo* " *obſcure and difficult an argument.* The " Socinians have juſt now publiſhed an " anſwer to us all; but I have not had a " ſight of it.—*The account given of Athana-* " *ſius's creed ſeems to me no-wiſe ſatisfactory.* " *I wiſh we were well rid of it.*" Life of Tillotſon by Birch, 8vo. p. 342. 343.

It is a great misfortune not to do right things, and give up what is wrong and indefenſible, at the time, as ſoon as perceived, eſpecially in religious matters; becauſe doctrines the moſt groundleſs and irrational, when ſtamped by authority, ſoon grow to be received without examination as the moſt ſacred truths; and reformation, from

from various cauſes, becomes the more difficult, the longer it is delayed.

Thus the ſuſpected text, 1 John v. 7. which was marked out as ſuch in our engliſh bibles, at the time of the reformation, and whoſe ſpuriouſneſs has been more and more evinced ſince that period to the preſent day, by the critical inquiries of learned men, is, nevertheleſs, in the face of all the demonſtration of its not having been of the writing of the apoſtle that the ſubject is capable of, now aſſerted to be genuine, with a temper and ſpirit and by a method of argument, which certainly does no credit to the writer, or the cauſe he would maintain. For this I would refer all that are judges, to Mr. Travis's own work, or to a Gleaning of remarks upon it, at the end of vol. 1, of "Commentaries and Eſſays, publiſhed by "the Society for promoting the know-"ledge of the Scriptures, 1786."

And yet, on this gentleman's hardy aſſertions, devoid of all proof, biſhop Seabury has lately proclaimed this exploded text to be authentic, throughout America, as far as his

feeble voice and little authority can go, in a charge delivered by him at Derby in the State of Connecticut, September 1786. "I am not ignorant, says he, p. 10. that "the authenticity of 1 John v. 7. is dis- "puted. Nor am I ignorant that it has "been *incontestably* established by the Rev. "Mr. Travis, in his letters to Mr. Gibbon." Dr. Croft also, p. 80. and Mr. Hawkins, p. 188. the two last Bampton-Lecturers, have sent their readers to Mr. Travis, as "hav- "ing evinced the genuineness of the text to "the intire satisfaction of every candid "and impartial inquirer." Ye will judge for yourselves, ye virtuous youth and searchers after truth, whether these gentlemen have not been too soon and easily satisfied.

Thus also the following history of recent facts will shew, in what different estimation this creed of Athanasius is held by some in high places in the church, than it was in Tillotson's days, by him, and others: and this,

this, even after it has been ſtill more clearly demonſtrated not to have been compoſed by Athanaſius, but drawn up long after his time, and put out under his name, moſt probably by one Vigilius Tapſenſis; the ſame who firſt cited the ſpurious text of 1 John v. 7, as genuine; one who accuſtomed himſelf to put the names of learned men of former times to his works, and paſs them off as their's; a practice, whatever his motive was for it, moſt highly to be condemned, tending to throw confuſion into hiſtory, and to prevent our coming at certainty about any perſons or things in former ages.

Soon after the ſeparation of the American States from the mother-country, in the year 1785, a liturgy was publiſhed at Boſton in New England, for the uſe of the firſt epiſcopal church in that city, in which the plan of Dr. Clarke's reformed liturgy was adopted, and the worſhip made ſtrictly unitarian, being addreſſed throughout to the One Almighty Father of all through Jeſus Chriſt. In this, however,

only one congregation was immediately concerned.

But in conſequence of a general meeting for the purpoſe, in the ſame year, there came out, *The book of Common Prayer and Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies,* as reviſed and propoſed to the uſe *of the proteſtant epiſcopal church, at a convention of the ſaid church in the ſtates of* NEW-YORK, NEW-JERSEY, PENSILVANIA, DELAWARE, MARYLAND, VIRGINIA, and SOUTH-CAROLINA, held in Philadelphia, from September 27th to October 7th, 1785. Philadelphia, printed 1786.

Conſidering the attachment of many to old forms, and the ſtrenuous efforts now uſed to preſerve a ſteady adherence to them, there was a commendable amendment of them made at this time; though it fell ſhort of the wiſhes and endeavours of not a few among them, eſpecially with reſpect to the article of worſhip. For I am well informed, that there was a motion made in the convention, for an alteration in the litany,

litany, and particularly for retaining only the firſt invocation, and removing the three others, namely, thoſe to *God the Son, God the Holy Ghoſt*, and *the holy and bleſſed Trinity*.

In their preface, they have commendably inſerted the different articles propoſed for a review by King William's eccleſiaſtical commiſſioners in 1689, among whom were thoſe excellent men, Tillotſon, Burnet, Patrick, Tenniſon, &c.

Two of the articles therein mentioned, to be reviewed, by thoſe eminent men, were,

"*Whether the* ATHANASIAN CREED *may "not, conſiſtently with piety, faith and cha- "rity, be either wholly omitted, or left indif- "ferent in itſelf?*"

"Whether the articles of religion may "not deſerve a review; and the ſubſcrip- "tion to them and the common prayer, be "contrived, after ſome manner, leſs except- "tionable than at preſent?"

But this american aſſembly did not ſtop here, and content themſelves with mere

words and declarations. The 39 articles they reduced to 20.

They excluded not only the creed of Athanaſius ſo called, but the Nicene creed alſo.

In the apoſtles' creed, they omit the clauſe of Chriſt's *deſcent into hell*; for which they aſſign the following reaſon: "This clauſe, "as Bp. *Burnet*, Bp. *Pearſon*, and other "writers inform us, is found in no creed, "nor mentioned by any writer, until about "the 5th century; and in the firſt creeds "that have this clauſe or article, that of "Chriſt's *burial* not being mentioned in "them, it follows that they underſtood "the deſcent into *hell* only of his burial or "deſcent into the grave, as the word is "otherwiſe tranſlated in the bible. The "Nicene creed hath only the burial, and "the Athanaſian only the deſcent into "hell."

You will judge, whether the hiſtory of what follows, with reſpect to this american epiſcopal liturgy, tells to the credit of thoſe who were concerned in ſome counter-reformations,

mations, may I not ſtile them, that were attempted, and ſome that were actually made in it.

In the firſt convention of the proteſtant epiſcopal church, held in Philadelphia, from Sept. 27 to Oct. 7, 1785, it was reſolved to "addreſs the archbiſhops and biſhops of "the church of England, requeſting them "to confer the epiſcopal character, on "ſuch perſons as ſhall be choſen and re-"commended to them for that purpoſe, "from the conventions of their church, "in their reſpective ſtates."

In their ſecond convention, held alſo at the city of Philadelphia in June, 1786, a letter was read from the Archbiſhops and Biſhops of the church of England, notifying their approbation of the addreſs made to them, and deſire of complying with the prayer of their addreſs, but expreſſing ſome heſitation on account of a report of alterations adopted, or intended in the american liturgy; "leſt they ſhould be the inſtru-"ments of eſtabliſhing an eccleſiaſtical "ſyſtem, which will be called a branch of "the church of England, but afterwards

" may poſſibly appear to have departed " from it eſſentially, either in doctrine or in " diſcipline."

In their next convention, held at Wilmington in Delaware, Oct. 1786, there was read a letter from the archbiſhops of Canterbury and York, in which, after having mentioned their having received their American Common-prayer-book, &c. they expreſs themſelves in theſe words; " The " whole of your communications was then, " with as little delay as poſſible, taken into " conſideration, at a meeting of the arch- " biſhops and fifteen of the biſhops, being " all who were then in London, and able " to attend; and it was impoſſible not to " obſerve with concern, that, if the eſſen- " tial doctrines of our common faith were " retained, leſs reſpect however was paid " to our liturgy than its own excellence, " and your declared attachment to it, had " led us to expect; not to mention a " variety of verbal alterations, of the ne- " ceſſity or propriety of which we are by " no means ſatisfied; we ſaw with grief, " that two of the confeſſions of our chriſ-

" tian

" tian faith, reſpectable for their antiquity, " have been intirely laid aſide; and that " even in that which is called the apoſ- " tles' creed, an article is omitted, which " was thought neceſſary to be inſerted, " with a view to a particular hereſy, in a " very early age of the church, and has " ever ſince had the venerable ſanction of " univerſal reception."

A little after, in the courſe of their letter, reſuming the ſubject, they ſay;

" We therefore moſt earneſtly exhort " you, that you reſtore to its integrity the " apoſtles' creed, in which you have omit- " ted an article merely, as it ſeems, from " miſrepreſentation of the ſenſe in which " it is underſtood by our church; nor can " we help adding, that we hope you will " think it but a decent proof of the at- " tachment which you profeſs to the ſer- " vices of our liturgy, to give to the other " two creeds a place in your book of com- " mon prayer, even though the uſe of them " ſhould be left diſcretional."

The above accounts are taken from the journals of the different conventions, printed at

at Philadelphia. In what follows, concerning this laſt convention at Wilmington, we are informed, that it was unanimouſly agreed to comply with the deſire of the engliſh biſhops, by re-admitting the Nicene creed into their american liturgy, but that it ſhould be at the option of the miniſter, to read that or the apoſtles' creed. The reſtoration however of the creed of Athanaſius, ſo called, to its place, was unanimouſly negatived by three of the ſtates, and by a majority of the other two. But Chriſt's *deſcent into hell* was again adopted and received into the apoſtles' creed, though not without ſome negative voices; and the others might perhaps ſatisfy themſelves with having declared publicly the ſenſe they gave it, as equivalent to his being put into the grave, or buried.

O ye *Tillotſons, Patricks, Burnets, Tenniſons,* could ye have been now recalled from your long quiet *(d)* repoſe in the grave, where

(d) I never read but with great diſlike, the hackneyed inſcription on hatchments, which preſents itſelf ſo often to our eyes in the ſtreets of this metropolis; *In cælo quies, in heaven reſt*; whereas in truth it ſhould be reverſed, *ſub terra*

where Chriſt your maſter was ſuffered to remain only three days, how different a part would ye have acted! To how much wider

terra quies, in cœlo vita, in the grave reſt, in heaven life; for ſurely no dull repoſe is to be expected there. And though ſuch ſort of things, I apprehend, are commonly left to undertakers, who follow a beaten road, without much diſtinction, I muſt confeſs I was particularly pleaſed to ſee over Savile-houſe, after its maſter, the late Sir George Savile, had quitted it and all earthly things, a hatchment with that fine bold chriſtian motto, *Reſurgam, I ſhall riſe again*, which none but the chriſtian can *ſay with confidence*. And it truly belonged to him, as a chriſtian; for ſuch he was, taking a latitude in many things to think for himſelf, as I believe all do that think at all on the ſubject. I remember hearing him once expreſs himſelf with diſapprobation, (that gentleman will pardon me) of Mr. Gibbon's unfair way of attacking chriſtianity in the guiſe of a pretended friend, inſtead of coming forth openly againſt what he eſteemed to be wrong. He was withal the moſt benevolent of men, leaving himſelf at laſt ſcarce a competency out of his vaſt fortunes, through his unbounded zeal to ſerve his friends, his relations, his country, and mankind. Of an integrity the moſt uncorrupted, but ſo well known, that it is almoſt an injury to him to name it; and, which crowns the rational virtuous character, worſhiping with profoundeſt reverence the one only living and true God, and parent of the univerſe. Some little teſtimony I could bear in theſe reſpects, from the year

wider a compaſs would ye have pleaded for your *eccleſiaſtical commiſſion* to be extended, had ye enjoyed thoſe lights concerning the equal rights of men, and the incompetency of human authority in the things of religion, with which the world hath been bleſt ſince your time, by the labours of Locke, Hoadley, Blackburne, Law, all theſe now, and ſome very lately, gathered to the ſame ſilent manſions with yourſelves, waiting the reſurrection-day!

It may be uſeful to ſubjoin a remark on the above american buſineſs, together with a ſhort account of another tranſaction in that country in ſome connection with it; as the whole will contribute to give you clear ideas on an eccleſiaſtical ſubject, commonly involved in much darkneſs.

To a mind in any due degree enlightened by a proper uſe of its reaſoning powers, and by the ſtudy of the ſcriptures themſelves, it muſt appear the reſult of a ſtrange ſuperſtition, for men, like theſe new american biſhops,

year 1774 to his lamented death, and am happy in paying this tribute of honour and grateful eſteem to his memory.

biſhops, to be ſent acroſs the Atlantic, to receive a power and authority of appointing or ordaining teachers of the goſpel, which otherwiſe they could not have exerciſed with benefit or effect; and this to be conveyed to them, through the laying on of the hands of chriſtian miniſters in England, of a particular name and deſcription, ſuppoſed to derive their peculiar privilege and power, in a regular, uninterrupted deſcent and ſucceſſion from the apoſtles.

And it is a matter of wonder to many, that ſeveral large provinces of that new world, after having contended ſo intrepidly for their civil independency, ſhould ſubject themſelves to the having chains put upon their minds and conſciences, the heavieſt of all others, and binding them upon their poſterity, by conſenting particularly to the great alteration *(e)* made in their fourth article of religion, in order to engage the engliſh biſhops to conſecrate the perſons ſent over

(e) In their new common-prayer book, printed at Philadelphia, 1787, the ivth article was as follows.

" Of the creed.

" The creed, commonly called the *apoſtles'* creed, ought to

over to them, and alſo by their tacit implied purpoſe of not deviating any farther from the doctrine and worſhip of the church of England, acknowleged on all hands, by very many of its own members, to ſtand in great need of a reformation in both theſe reſpects.

As to apoſtolic ſucceſſion, or any virtue or powers derived from it, which the church of Rome and church of England claim, it is

to be received and believed: becauſe it may be proved by the holy ſcripture."

It was ordered to be altered as follows, in compliance with the requiſition of the engliſh biſhops.

" Of the creeds.

" The two creeds, namely, that commonly called the " *apoſtles'* creed, and the Nicene creed, ought to be received " and believed, becauſe they may be proved by the holy " ſcripture."

So that inſtead of a creed, which declared one perſon, God, the Father almighty, to be God; they have contrary to their own purpoſe, admitted and approved a creed, which declares *three* perſons, each of them to be *very God*, and all the three equally to be worſhiped and glorified. It is to be hoped, that the americans will not look upon the law that conſtrains them to this to be like the law of the Medes and Perſians, never to be altered.

is a mere phantom, ſignifying nothing; which, if it could be proved to be regular and unbroken, would give no powers above what any other miniſters of the goſpel poſſeſs, without any ſuch pretences. And with reſpect to baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper, the latter of which has been ſo aſtoniſhingly perverted from the ſimplicity of its original inſtitution, there is no ground from the ſcripture, or from early antiquity, *(f)* to appropriate the miniſtration of theſe ordinances to the teachers of the goſpel, ſave what aroſe from propriety and decorum, and on that account very rightly to be attended to: but that otherwiſe, laymen, thoſe that were not teachers of religion, might officiate by themſelves in theſe ordinances with equal good effect.

I doubt not therefore but that the members of the firſt epiſcopal church of Boſton in

(e) See this ſubject diſcuſſed with great learning and accuracy, in "Bohmeri diſſertationes juris eccleſiaſtici, particularly de coitionibus chriſtianorum ad capiendum cibum, de jure laicorum ſacerdotali, et de jure dandi baptiſmum."

in New England will be applauded and approved by all equal judges, as having exerted a proper chriſtian ſpirit, and exerciſed only thoſe powers which by apoſtolic practice and authority belong to every chriſtian ſociety, in ordaining Mr. Freeman, a perſon moſt deſervedly choſen by them, to be their miniſter: and eſpecially after they and their miniſter had ſhewn all proper deference and condeſcenſion to received order and cuſtom, in applications to the new american biſhops for Mr. Freeman to have received ordination from them, but which was not to be obtained without ſuch ſubmiſſions and declarations as the goſpel of Chriſt condemns. And though, in their form of ordination, they have expreſſed, that they ſhall not object to Mr. Freeman's having alſo an epiſcopal ordination, it is to be hoped, that all the members of the congregation will ſo far overcome former prejudices, as to ſhew themſelves ſuperior to ſuch weakneſs, in imagining, that the hand of a biſhop can convey any thing to their miniſter, of which he is not already poſſeſſed.

The

The (*g*) form of the ordination I have given you in the margin. The plan of it was

(*g*) The exact manner in which the whole tranſaction paſſed was as follows:

November 18, 1787, after evening-prayer, the Church-wardens came into the reading-deſk and having placed Mr. Freeman between them, the ſenior warden acquainted the congregation with the deſign of the meeting. A ſhort prayer introduced the ſervice, and then the following vote of ordination was read, voted and ſigned,

Boſton, 18th Nov. 1787.

"Voted, that We, the Wardens, Veſtry, Proprietors, and Congregation of the Chapel, or Firſt Epiſcopal Church in Boſton, do, by virtue of the third article of the Declaration of Rights, hereby ſolemnly Elect, Ordain, Conſtitute and Appoint, the Rev. James Freeman of ſaid Boſton, Clerk, to be our Rector, Miniſter, Prieſt, Paſtor, Teaching Elder, and Public Teacher, to preach the word of God, and to diſpenſe leſſons and inſtructions in Piety, Religion and Morality, and to miniſter the holy Sacraments to the Congregation, and ſo to do, perform and diſcharge all the other duties and offices, which of right belong to any other Rector, Miniſter, Paſtor, Teaching Elder, Public Teacher, or Prieſt in Orders.

And it is hereby intended and underſtood, that the Authority and Rights hereby given to the Rev. James Freeman, to be our Rector, Miniſter, Prieſt, Paſtor, Teaching Elder, and Public Teacher, are to remain in full force ſo long as he ſhall continue to preach the word of

was ſuggeſted, I am told, by Governor Bowdoin, a member of the congregation ~~of the epiſcopal~~ -al

God, and diſpenſe inſtructions of Piety, Religion, and Morality conformable to our opinions and ſentiments of the Holy Scriptures, and no longer, and that our judgment of his not conforming to our religious ſentiments and opinions, ſhall be aſcertained by the votes of three-fourths of the Wardens and Veſtry, and of three-fourths of the Proprietors uſually worſhipping in ſaid Church ſeparately and individually taken.

Signed,

Thomas Bulfinch,
Shrimpton Hutchinſon, } Wardens.

In behalf of ourſelves, and the veſtry, and a majority of the proprietors and congregation of the chapel, or firſt epiſcopal church in Boſton.

After the vote of ordination the following was paſſed:

" And it is further voted that if at any time hereafter, Ordination by the impoſition of hands from a biſhop in common and uſual form can be procured for Mr. Freeman, without ſacrificing our own religious ſentiments to thoſe of others, we will adopt that method, in confirmation of the preſent mode of ordination. Mr. F. then ſignified his acceptance of the election and ordination, and that he believed it to be apoſtolic and valid. After which the ſenior warden declared him duly ordained and " whilſt in a " moſt intereſting manner, he exhorted him to do his " duty

church
epiſcopal chapel, a gentleman of learning, and great merit. And I am alſo informed, that many diſtinguiſhed characters in that part of the world, to whom the plan was communicated, before it was put in practice, expreſſed their intire approbation of it. They conſidered it as a revival of the ſentiments which prevailed in the churches of that country, at its firſt ſettlement. In the New England platform of church diſcipline, publiſhed by a ſynod, in the year 1684, it is ſaid; "Ordination, we account nothing "elſe, but the ſolemn putting of a man into "his place and office in the church, where-"unto he had right before by election; "being like the inſtalling of a magiſtrate "in the common wealth. In ſuch churches "where there are no elders, impoſition of "hands may be performed by ſome of "the brethren orderly choſen thereunto. "For if the people may elect officers which "is the greater, and wherein the ſubſtance

duty with fidelity, he laid one hand upon him, and with the other delivered him the bible, injoining him to make that ſacred book the rule of his faith and conduct. Then followed prayer and a bleſſing."

" of the office doth conſiſt, they may much " more (occaſion and need ſo requiring) " impoſe hands in ordination, which is leſs, " and but the accompliſhment of the " other."

Every lover of learning, piety, and truth, will riſe at the name of *Locke*, the honour of our country, and of your univerſity in particular, ye ſons of *Iſis!* however unjuſtly expelled from his place among you, in trying times, by arbitrary power.

In your ſtudious, ſhady walks, and groves, oft viſited and made ſacred by him, he meditated and planned his firſt immortal work; in which, with thought profound, he explored and delineated, the principles, and elements of human knowlege, and how beſt to conduct the mind in the ſearch and attainment of truth.

Nor did he more excell in thus inveſtigating, and teaching the uſe of our natural reaſoning powers, than in deſcrying, and pointing out the proper application of them, to the right

right underſtanding of the written records of divine revelation, of which he was a firm believer. Of his admirable ſkill herein, his preface to ſome of St. Paul's epiſtles, and commentaries and notes upon them, are a noble monument.

In religious opinion he was ſtrictly unitarian; holding the ſupreme, omnipotent Father to be God alone, and no other perſon beſides him.

What he thought at large, concerning the impoſition of creeds, and articles of faith, by human authority, is ſeen in his "Letters on toleration;" and you may gather it particularly, from his "Reaſonable-"neſs of chriſtianity, as contained in the "ſcriptures." In which admirable tract, he advances and proves this point, *viz. that Chriſt and his apoſtles, did not propound any article as neceſſarily to be believed to make a man a chriſtian, but this*; *that* JESUS IS THE CHRIST, *or the Meſſias.* No one therefore hath any right or title to impoſe the belief of any other article as neceſſary to chriſtian communion, or man's final ſalvation, than Chriſt required.

In this treatiſe alſo, amidſt other things, Mr. Locke aſſerts and demonſtrates, that the phraſe, *Son of God*, in the New Teſtament, applied to our Saviour, ſignifies nothing more than *the Chriſt*, or the Meſſiah.

And this I would obſerve by the way, may teach you, what judgment to form of thoſe very learned perſons, who will have Chriſt to be the Son of God, as Dr. Clarke ſays, (Serm. vol. v. p. 30, 8vo.) "on account of deriving his being from the "Father, in a ſingular and incompre-"henſible manner, before the world was:" or, as Bp. Pearſon on the creed, (p. 142. 1683) and others maintain, that Chriſt was the Son of God, "by a communication of "the divine eſſence to him, which was a "proper generation; and that by this his "natural and eternal generation, Chriſt is "of the ſame ſubſtance, and conſequently "of the ſame power and dignity with "God." Common ſenſe rejects the idea of a Son of God, (that is, one, who, by the very terms, derives his being from him) becoming equal in power and dignity to

HIM,

HIM, from whom he received his being. And the holy ſcriptures acknowlege no ſuch *Son of God* as this, ſo derived; nor happily do they deal in ſuch dark unintelligible language, as *proper generations, eternal generations and communications of the divine eſſence,* as the way, ſtrange to ſpeak, in the which perſons are made Gods, equal to the ſupreme Father of all.

Great allowance ſhould be made for thoſe, who by taking up a wrong ſyſtem concerning Jeſus Chriſt, or through the illuſions of ſcience falſely ſo called, involve themſelves in a cloud of words without meaning. But do ye always keep ſight of ſcripture, and uſe no words but ſuch as you, and every plowman, and drayman, can equally underſtand! For moſt aſſuredly, Chriſt and his apoſtles, intended to be underſtood by ſuch, as well as by Cambridge and Oxford ſcholars.

How far ſoever the famous Rector of St. James's, the virtuous, learned, and able Dr. Clarke, miſled by ſome of the early chriſtian

writers, exalted the character of Jeſus Chriſt, beyond what the ſcriptures make him; yet he always contended for the divine unity as a point the moſt ſacred; that the Father was the only true God, and object of religious worſhip.

The amendments, which he earneſtly wiſhed to have taken place in the liturgy of the church of England, are exactly conformable to this idea. This appears from his *Reformed Common-prayer-book*, in which ſuch amendments are marked in his own hand-writing; which was given by his ſon, the late Mr. Clarke, to the Britiſh Muſeum, and is there preſerved. All the direct addreſſes to Chriſt and the holy ghoſt, are blotted out by him: and ſuch only reſerved and allowed, where God, the Father only is invoked and adored.

What Mr. Emlyn has preſerved of his ſentiments on the preſent ſubject, with whom he appears to have lived in great intimacy the latter part of his life, is too much deſerving your attention not to be tranſcribed at large.

It

It was on the proſpect of Dr. Clarke being to be raiſed to the ſee of Canterbury, that Mr. Emlyn had an interview with him, of which he gives the following relation.

"Some time, ſays he, in November 1727, Dr. Clarke wrote to me in a familiar letter, *that he had a great mind to talk with me*, if I could come any morning, but *Saturday*. Accordingly within two or three days I went to him, and we talked more freely and cloſely of theſe matters. We ſoberly and fairly conſidered what difficulties and juſt objections might lie in his way, on the ſuppoſal of his being offered ſuch eccleſiaſtical dignity. For I muſt ſay, that he ever ſeemed to me, ſeriouſly concerned not to violate his conſcience for any preferment, nor to run raſhly into great ſnares; nor did I ever know any man more ready to hear, with all the eaſe and calmneſs poſſible, what might be in reaſon oppoſed. He never intended, by any means, to be taken off from profeſſing and defending what he believed to be the *great truths* of the goſpel.

'pel, and in particular ſaid, he intended 'to print a new edition of his *Scripture-* 'doctrine, &c. with ſome additions.

'The greateſt difficulty which occurred, 'as I remember, was the buſineſs of *ordi-* 'nation of prieſts, and deacons. Some things 'in the preſcribed form he did not ap- 'prove, and could not uſe; particularly, the 'hymn, *Come Holy Ghoſt, eternal God,* &c. 'but there being liberty to uſe another 'hymn, this did not preſs; ſome other 'matters I objected to, which did not ſtick 'with him. But the grand objection of all 'was, the requiring the perſons to be or- 'dained, to *ſubſcribe the articles*, according to 'canon 36. He ſaid, it would be evil for 'him to require them to do, what he 'would not judge fit to do himſelf, or to 'that effect; which I thought to be a juſt 'reflection. But I obſerved to him, that 'although if a ſuffragan biſhop ordained 'any without taking that ſubſcription, he 'might be ſuſpended from giving orders for 'one year, by his metropolitan, yet by 'that canon, no penalty was incurred by 'the metropolitan himſelf. However as

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'the perſons ordained could not enjoy any 'benefice, without ſuch ſubſcription, and 'might legally claim it; I thought he 'ought plainly to tell them, that he no 'way encouraged them to ſubſcribe, nor 'did he approve of it, but yet if themſelves 'were ſatisfied in their own minds that 'they could ſafely do it, he ſhould not bar 'them of their liberty therein. To which 'the Doctor anſwered, *Nay, I would tell 'them further, that I had not accepted pre-'ferment myſelf for that very reaſon, and that 'if it were in my power, I would have it 'taken away.*"—Emlyn's works, vol. ii. p. 493.

From this narrative, it may deſerve to be remarked; that the firſt princes of the houſe of Hanover, George I. and George II. and his royal conſort, the patrons of this learned and worthy divine, ſhewed extraordinary favour towards him, although he was known to be an Arian, i. e. one who did not believe the doctrine of the Trinity.

And as theſe great perſonages had thoughts of advancing Dr. Clarke to the higheſt dignity in the church, it is probable that of themſelves,

themſelves, they would have had no objection to ſuch alterations in the liturgy, as he was earneſt and ſolicitous to introduce.

It is not to be expected, that princes ſhould turn reformers: but it is a great happineſs, when they do nothing to obſtruct or hinder the ſalutary work.

The moſt honeſt and truly learned Mr. Whiſton's teſtimony to the Divine Unity, and his ſufferings for it, ſhould be well known to you. For this I would refer you to his memoirs of his own life, written in his old age; a moſt edifying work, paſſing by ſome weakneſſes and indiſcretions very pardonable at ſuch a period, and in the midſt of ſuch ſhining excellencies. You have there an account, with what zeal and labour, having given up his preferments for the goſpel's ſake, and a penſioner on the bounties of others, this apoſtolic man ſpent the laſt forty years of his life, in travelling about from place to place, and bearing teſtimony againſt the impoſition of ſubſcription

tion

tion to human articles of faith, as a ſnare to good minds only; and in endeavours to induce the governors of the church to render the liturgy a ſcriptural worſhip, i. e. unitarian; to correct the doxologies, to omit the creed called the *Athanaſian*, and ſeveral clauſes in that called the *Nicene*, to reform the firſt petitions in the liturgy, with the direction of the reſt to God, the ſupreme Father of all.

Somewhat leſs than forty years ago were publiſhed, "Free and candid diſquiſitions, "relating to the church of England, and "the means of advancing religion therein, "addreſſed to the governing powers in "church and ſtate, and more immediately "to the two houſes of convocation."

In this deſign were embarked ſome perſons of the laity of great learning, and worth, and ſome highly eſtimable clerical characters: but we have never yet been made acquainted with their names.

Never

Never could any more reaſonable or moderate propoſals have been made for a redreſs of things amiſs. The point of ſubſcription was particularly conſidered, and modeſt mention made of its being the opinion of ſome among them, *(h)* that one article, out of the thirty-nine, would be ſufficient to all the real and uſeful purpoſes of ſubſcription, *viz.* the ſixth. I remember at the time, that in one of our univerſities, there was a general diſpoſition in the younger part of it's members, to favour theſe diſquiſitions, and an expectation that ſome reformation would have taken place in conſequence of them.

About

(h) Free and candid diſquiſitions, p. 163. note. The ſixth article is, this:

Of the ſufficiency of the holy Scriptures for ſalvation.

" Holy ſcripture containeth all things neceſſary to ſal-
" vation; ſo that whatever is not read therein, nor may
" be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man,
" that it ſhould be believed as an article of the faith, or
" be thought requiſite or neceſſary to ſalvation. In the
" name of the holy ſcripture we do underſtand thoſe
" canonical books of the Old and New Teſtament, of
" whoſe authority was never any doubt in the church.

About 20 years afterwards, in 1771, a number of ſerious members of the church of England became perſuaded, that more active meaſures to obtain the deſired reformation were to be purſued, and joined in a ſcheme for petitioning the legiſlature for relief in the matter of ſubſcription to the 39 articles and liturgy of the church of England, and many reſpectable perſons in different parts of the kingdom united with them in their application to parliament, and ſet their names to the petition.

Their cauſe was ſo well argued and defended in the Commons' houſe of parliament, by ſome of its moſt illuſtrious members; and ſo many appeared for it, that though unſucceſsful by the majority of votes againſt it, it was truly triumphant; and the nation in general became convinced, that it was juſt and reaſonable, and deſerved to be liſtened to and encouraged *(i)*. And from

(i) In the works of Dr. Jebb, lately ſo well exhibited to the public, may be ſeen ſome memorials of what paſſed at the time, with many important obſervations, which may be of ſignal uſe upon any future application.

from that day may be dated the general diſpoſition towards a reformation in our eccleſiaſtical ſyſtem throughout the country, and alſo for an amendment in the forms of public worſhip; which laſt has been more apparent ſince, and now much prevails. Although the leading clergy ſeem to have taken a contrary ply, as is but too evident from the american tranſaction relating to the creed of Athanaſius above-mentioned, and from *(k)* the ſermon on *the duty of contending*

(*k*) Dr. Horne, in a note to this ſermon, p. 17, recomends Mr. Leſlie's writings, as an antidote to the opinions of the ſocinians, or unitarians. Together with them, I could wiſh you to read three ſhort tracts of Mr. Emlyn's, which are placed at the beginning of the ſecond volume of his works, *viz.*

1. Remarks on Mr. Charles Leſlie's laſt dialogue, on the ſocinian controverſy.

2. A vindication of the remarks, &c.

3. An examination of Mr. Charles Leſlie's laſt dialogue, relating to the *ſatisfaction* of Chriſt.

For ſtrength and acuteneſs of reaſoning, and juſt interpretation of ſcripture, you will meet with few equal to this candid and eminent writer.

To another part of his ſermon, p. 20, Dr. Horne alſo ſubjoins this note; "An excellent little tract was printed "for Rivington, in 1774. I wiſh 20,000 of theſe were "diſperſed

contending for the faith, i. e. the doctrine of the trinity, (with a diſcourſe on the *trinity in unity* annexed) preached by the preſident of Magdalen, in his place as dean of Canterbury, before the preſent archbiſhop on his primary viſitation, with large approbation; and now laſt, from the letter of an undergraduate to Dr. Prieſtley, by the ſame hands, the better to induce you to acquieſce in things as they are, and to prevent making any examination yourſelves.

It is a vain thought to expect, by ſuch weak attempts, to lay aſleep the ſpirit of free inquiry into the ſcriptures, which has begun to be awakened among you, and in the nation at large; and that all murmur and

" diſperſed through the kingdom, at this time. It was in-
" titled, *A preſervative againſt the publications diſperſed by*
" *modern ſocinians; in which the impiety and abſurdity of*
" *their principles are clearly ſhewn; addreſſed by a country*
" *clergyman to his pariſhioners.*"

Concerning this piece ſo highly commended, I ſhould chearfully ſubmit it to any rational inquirer to determine, whether it does not rather tend to recomend the perſons and the doctrine, which the author oppoſes.

and diſſatisfaction with the doctrines, and forms of worſhip impoſed by the awful and almoſt univerſal authority of ages, will be quieted and ſuppreſſed.

So did the ſuperior eccleſiaſtics, at the beginning of the 16th century, in our own and other countries of this weſtern world, exert every effort to ſtifle the very general cry and demand for a reformation; and fondly imagined they had accompliſhed the wiſhed-for point in Leo the Xth's eaſy and voluptuous reign; when an obſcure german monk, but of courage the moſt invincible, and equal piety and integrity, ſuddenly ſtarted from his cell, rouſed by ſome of the moſt glaring abuſes, and profligate profanation of things ſacred then carrying on under the pope's immediate order and authority; and the moſt outrageous oppoſition being made to his reaſonable objections, without the leaſt conceſſion or redreſs given, he was excited to go on detecting and expoſing one grievance and corruption after another, till the eyes of many provinces and kingdoms were opened, and threw off the papal yoke: happy would it have been, if they had

had not all of them impoſed another of their own, which in time has turned out moſt grievous to be borne; and which I am ſorry to note, your ſuppoſed brother undergraduate ſeeks to bind upon you for ever.

The *clerical petitioners*, who had their meeting at the Feathers' tavern, Strand, gave their reaſons to the public, why they judged it more expedient, and preferable, to apply to the legiſlature for relief, rather than to the biſhops alone.

But there was *another clerical aſſembly* at the time, compoſed of a different ſet of men, who met at Tenniſon's library near the Mews, with a view, as they expreſs themſelves, "to requeſt a reviſal of the "articles and liturgy, and forms of ſub- "ſcription; but judged it fitting to cón- "ſult firſt their ſpiritual ſuperiors, and to "be directed by them.

"Upon application to the archbiſhop of "Canterbury, (Dr. Cornwallis) he replied "in terms of candour to their intentions,

" and that he would lay their wiſhes before " his brethren."

The ſmall ſheet of paper in my poſſeſſion, whence the above is taken, was printed and circulated *to inform the clergy* (who had joined in great numbers with the leaders in this application to the biſhops,) *what had been done; and that they might not ſuppoſe the matter wholly dropped, while it remained ſuſpended.* It is dated, December, 1772.

Some of the principal gentlemen concerned in this aſſociation to procure a reviſal of the articles, liturgy, and forms of ſubſcription of the church of England, now fill very high ſtations in it; viz. Dr. Porteus, lately moved to the ſee of London; Dr. Yorke, Bp. of Ely, Dr. Percy, Bp. of Dromore, in Ireland; and probably others, who may be unknown to me as having taken any part in it.

It is obvious for you here to remark, thoſe among you particularly who are candidates for the ſacred miniſtry, how different the preſident of Magdalen's ſentiments of the church of England are, from thoſe entertained by theſe his now ſpiritual ſuperiors.

He

He is for having you to ſubſcribe to and acquieſce for life in things as they are now eſtabliſhed, and prohibits all inquiry by condemning every thought of any alteration in any reſpect, (*l*) unleſs it firſt occur to, and be put in execution by the governors of the church. But *theſe gentlemen* have, by their example, pointed out to you, may I not ſay, that it is *your duty*, to examine your creeds and articles, and the nature of your ſubſcription to them, how far right and juſtifiable; and have declared, that an amendment is needed in your articles, liturgy, and forms of ſubſcription. And as it would be an injury to them, to ſuppoſe that their ſentiments on theſe points are contrary to what they publiſhed them a few years ago, you may reaſonably expect, that they will not let the matter be wholly dropped; and that ſomething will be attempted by them, of what good men have

(*l*) 'If the compilers were miſtaken in an article *of* '*the thirty-nine*, it is incumbent on our governors, when 'convinced of ſuch miſtake, to alter or expunge that ar-'ticle.' Letter to Dr. Prieſtley, by an undergraduate, p. 27.

long expected in these matters, for the honour of religion, and the ease of honest minds. Nor can it be supposed, that they would now allege, that the state of things is altered from what it was, and the creeds and articles and subscriptions of the church, discovered to be no grievance at all. The reverse of this is unquestionably the truth. From the free discussion which these matters have undergone for these fifteen years past, the unreasonableness of many things, to which you are called to subscribe and to conform, hath more appeared, and their contradiction to the scriptures, the only standard of doctrine and worship, been still more convincingly demonstrated.

A learned person of rank in the university of Oxford, a very few years ago, after giving the strongest arguments for a new version of our english bible, with great good sense recomends, that "acts of that nature done "by authority, in which are included litur- "gies or public forms of worship, should be "revised at the distance of half a century,

"to

" to take off the almoſt ſacred veneration " the people have for things, which not " their merit, but antiquity alone has conſe- " crated." But foreſeeing, that ſome would object to a plan of this kind, from an apprehenſion that an eagerneſs for reformation might in ſuch caſes carry matters to too great a length; he ſtates the objection and anſwers it himſelf.

" Would the innovator," he puts it, " herewith reſt ſatisfied! would he not de- " ſire after this a reviſal of the liturgy, " with the xxxix articles; and proceed " from eccleſiaſtical, to civil matters? Theſe " are not neceſſary," replies he to the objector, " perhaps not probable conſe- " quences: but allowing they were; what " nobler object could the parliament, could " the convocation have under their con- " templation, than the petitions of ſerious " and well-diſpoſed men; preſented, at " proper intervals, with becoming humility, " praying, not to be releaſed (as in a late " inſtance) from the bonds by which ſo- " ciety is united, but that means might be " deviſed, the moſt efficacious, for quieting

" their conſcientious ſcruples, and ſetting " them forward in the way of religious " improvement?"—Critical remarks on the books of Job, Proverbs, Pſalms, Eccleſiaſtes, and Canticles; pref. p. ix. by *Dr. Durell*, D.D. principal of Hertford college, and prebendary of Canterbury, 1772.

The ſame valuable and liberal author, in p. 180. of this work, ſpeaking of the curſes uttered againſt enemies, ſometimes to be met with in the book of Pſalms, makes this remark.

" How far it may be proper to continue " the reading of theſe pſalms in the daily " ſervice of our church, I leave to the con- " ſideration of the legiſlature to determine. " A chriſtian of erudition may conſider " theſe imprecations only as the natural " ſentiments of jews, which the benign re- " ligion he profeſſes, abhors and condemns. " But what are the illiterate to do, who " know not where to draw the line between " the law and the goſpel? They hear both " read, one after the other, and, I fear, too " often think them both of equal obliga- " tion; and even take ſhelter under ſcripture

" to

" to cover their curſes. Though I am con-
" ſcious I here tread on ſlippery ground, I
" will take leave to hint, that notwith-
" ſtanding the high antiquity that ſanctifies
" as it were this practice; it would, in the
" opinion of a number of wiſe and good
" men, be more for the credit of the chriſ-
" tian church, to omit a few of thoſe pſalms,
" and to ſubſtitute ſome parts of the goſ-
" pel in their ſtead. See *Les ſentimens des*
" *theologiens de Hollande*; attributed to Le
" Clerc in his younger days."

It is worthy of your notice that this judicious writer, lately taken away from this world, where he filled his honourable ſtation ſo uſefully, was of opinion, that many might have conſcientious ſcruples with reſpect to ſome things in the articles and liturgy of the church of England, and find them a bar to religious improvement; and that he not only recomends a becoming and modeſt application to governors for relief in ſuch caſes, but intimates, that it is the duty, and for the honour of the legiſlature, to liſten and attend to ſuch petitioners.

'LET

'LET no one lightly entertain ſuſpicions 'of any ſerious propoſal for the advance- 'ment of religious knowlege; nor, out 'of unreaſonable prejudice, endeavour to 'obſtruct any inquiry, that profeſſes to aim 'at the further illuſtration of the great 'ſcheme of the goſpel in general, or the 'removal of error in any part, in *doctrine*, 'in practice, or in *worſhip*. *An opinion is 'not therefore falſe, becauſe it contradicts re- 'ceived notions: but whether true or falſe, 'let it be ſubmitted to a fair examination*; 'truth muſt in the end be a gainer by it, and 'appear with the greater evidence.* Where 'freedom of inquiry is maintained under 'the direction of the ſincere word of God, 'falſehood may perhaps triumph for a day; 'but to-morrow truth will certainly pre- 'vail, and every ſucceeding day will confirm 'her ſuperiority.'—Bp. *Lowth*'s viſitation ſermon, preached at Durham, 1758.

Thus, 30 years ago, did this fine writer, and eminent divine, plead Dr. Prieſtley's cauſe againſt his adverſaries, and reprobate the practice and the little arts uſed by Dr. Horne, who is for having you to con-

condemn him unheard, and ſeeks to prejudice you againſt his opinions by mere declamation, and expreſſions of aſtoniſhment and diſlike, inſtead of bringing them to the teſt of ſcripture, as Bp. Lowth recomends, whether they be true or falſe.

And ſo far was this learned man from preſuming, that all things relating to the doctrine and worſhip of the church of England were right, that he invites all its members to examine for themſelves whether they are ſo, and bids them take care, that, through unreaſonable prejudices, they do not obſtruct any inquiry, that aims at the removal of error in any point, in doctrine, in practice, or in worſhip.

And thus have you ſeen, that not only this prelate lately deceaſed, but his preſent ſucceſſor in the ſee of London, and another alſo high on the epiſcopal bench, together with other learned and approved writers of the church of England, all agree in declaring that a reviſal of her creeds, articles and forms of worſhip is much wanted, and that it is the duty of all to inquire how far they are agreeable to the word of God; which is

nothing

nothing more than Dr. Prieſtley has recommended to you, before you blindly ſubſcribe to them, and ſolemnly declare them to be true and agreeable to the ſcriptures.

Whether Dr. Horne acted a fair part towards you, in aſſuming a character as being one of your own claſs, which might give him a plauſible colour and ſanction for hiding ſuch neceſſary information upon the ſubject from you, belongs to you to conſider.

SECTION III.

Of Dr. Prieſtley's *character, as a philoſopher, and theologian.*

THE preſident of Magdalen, at the end of the letter, in his character of undergraduate, to Dr. Prieſtley, paſſes a ſhort compliment (*m*) upon

(*m*) "With great reſpect for your character as a man "of ſcience, and equal diſlike to your principles, as a "theologian, I am, &c.

An Undergraduate."

Oxford, April 13, 1787.

upon him, as a philoſopher, though far from having raiſed in you, in the preceding parts, one favourable idea of him in any reſpect, ſo as to make you deſirous to ſee any of his productions; and at the ſame time profeſſes, what indeed he has not been backward to diſcover, a very great diſlike to him as a divine.

As the ground of this diſlike, which he ſtrives to infuſe into you, relates to ſubjects, ſome of them of the very higheſt importance, I think you intereſted in and requeſt your attention to the fairer repreſentation, which I ſhall endeavour to give, of the opinions of one ſo obnoxious to him: and making allowance for prejudice, from which few are exempt, though my earlieſt habits and preposſeſſions leaned another way; and profeſſing obligations more than I can expreſs, to the writings, example, and friendſhip of this eminent perſon, nevertheleſs, I truſt you will not find my account of things far from the truth.

With all honour due, and juſtly due, to thoſe learned men, whoſe lectures you attend, I will beg leave to ſay, that you may alſo

alſo take along with you the writings of Dr. Prieſtley in moſt branches of ſcience, and read them to advantage.

It is no ſmall thing in his favour, to recommend him, that he is already become, may I ſay it, the preceptor of nations. For not only his philoſophical and metaphyſical, but his theological works, are ſought after with avidity, and highly approved by foreigners, and ſeveral of them tranſlated into different languages on our continent. And writings in defence of chriſtianity, coming from ſuch a hand, cannot fail of raiſing curioſity, and of contributing to remove the common preſumption among unbelievers, and frequent ground of their unbelief, *viz*, that the goſpel is that ſyſtem of doctrines which is publicly eſtabliſhed in each catholic and proteſtant ſtate; whereas it is almoſt univerſally quite another thing, in reſpect both of faith, and worſhip.

Dr. Prieſtley's aim in his writings, to which all his ſtudies tend, is to promote the glory of God, beſt ſeen and manifeſted in the happineſs of his creatures; to diſcover and

and make known his wiſdom and boundleſs goodneſs, as they are exhibited to us in his revealed word, or in his glorious works abroad: for all nature is but the revelation of HIM, its great creator.

It was to theſe moſt laudable ends, that *Locke* and *Newton* conſecrated their talents, and immenſe labours. Though it is to be lamented, that the noble family by whom the manuſcript-papers of the latter have been inherited, have hitherto declined to give them to the public. Imperfect hints from a mind ſo penetrating might be of ſervice. And Sir Iſaac Newton is known to have applied himſelf in a very extraordinary manner to the ſtudy of the ſacred writings, and of all ancient writers that might illuſtrate them. Nor are we without evidence of his having been a ſtrict unitarian, holding God to be one perſon, one eternal mind, and Jeſus, the creature, and ſervant of that God.

Our author walks in the ſame path with theſe two eminent lights, who would not have diſdained to have taken him by the hand; but happily, coming after them, he devoted

devoted himſelf at an earlier hour, and with a much more fearleſs ſpirit than they, to ſtudy and illuſtrate the ſacred volume, and to wipe off that polytheiſm and irrational ſuperſtition, which they alſo ſaw, and which for ages had disfigured it.

But you will judge better of the principles by which he has been influenced, from hearing him ſpeak himſelf. In the preface to his hiſtory of Electricity, where he himſelf adds to the common ſtock of knowlege on the ſubject he treats of, whilſt he deſcribes what others had done before him; he thus paints the views of a true philoſopher, which he has uniformly aimed to make his own, p. xvi. xvii.

'A philoſopher ought to be ſomething 'greater, and better than another man. 'The contemplation of the works of God 'ſhould give a ſublimity to his virtue, 'ſhould expand his benevolence, extinguiſh 'every thing mean, baſe, and ſelfiſh in his 'nature, give a dignity to all his ſentiments, 'and teach him to aſpire to the moral per-'fections of the great author of all things. 'What great and exalted beings would 'philoſophers

'philoſophers be, would they but let the 'objects about which they are converſant, 'have their proper moral effect upon 'their minds! A life ſpent in the con-'templation of the productions of divine 'power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, would be 'a life of devotion. The more we ſee of 'the wonderful ſtructure of the world, and 'the laws of nature, the more clearly do 'we comprehend their admirable uſes, to 'make all the percipient creation happy; 'a ſentiment which cannot but fill the heart 'with unbounded love, gratitude and joy.

'Even every thing painful and diſagreea-'able in the world appears to be provided, 'as a remedy of ſome other greater incon-'venience, or a neceſſary means of a much 'greater happineſs; ſo that from this ele-'vated point of view, he ſees all temporary 'evils and inconveniences to vaniſh, in the 'glorious proſpect of the great good to 'which they are ſubſervient. Hence, he 'is able to venerate and rejoice in God, 'not only in the bright ſunſhine, but alſo 'in the darkeſt ſhades of nature, whereas

'vulgar minds are apt to be diſconcerted 'with the appearance of evil.

'Nor is the cultivation of piety uſeful 'to us only as *men*, it is even uſeful to us as '*philoſophers*; and as true philoſophy tends 'to promote piety, ſo a generous and man-'ly piety is reciprocally ſubſervient to the 'purpoſes of philoſophy; and this both 'in a direct and indirect manner. While 'we keep in view the great final cauſe of 'all the parts and laws of nature, we have 'ſome clue by which to trace the efficient 'cauſe. This is moſt of all obvious in 'that part of philoſophy which reſpects 'the animal creation. As the great and 'excellent Dr. Hartley obſerves. "Since "this world is a ſyſtem of benevolence, and "conſequently its author the object of un-"bounded love and adoration, benevolence "and piety are our only true guides in our "inquiries into it; the only keys that will "unlock the myſteries of nature, and clues "which lead through her labyrinths. Of "this all branches of natural hiſtory, and "natural philoſophy, afford abundant in-"ſtances.

"In

" In all theſe inquiries, let the inquirer " take it for granted previouſly, that every " thing is right, and the beſt that can be, " *cæteris manentibus*; that is, let him " with a pious confidence ſeek for benevo- " lent purpoſes, and he will be always di- " rected to the right road; and after a due " continuance in it, attain to ſome new " and valuable truth: whereas every other " principle and motive of examination, be- " ing foreign to the great plan on which " the univerſe is conſtructed, muſt lead into " endleſs mazes, errors, and perplexities *."

When in the ſpring of the year 1787, I aſked one, who will be allowed a moſt capable judge, how he would in a few words expreſs our common friend's merits in philoſophy; the next time I ſaw him, he gave me the following ſketch, which I tranſcribe for your peruſal; and as he accompanied it with no reſtrictions, I hope I violate no part of friendly confi-

* Hartley's Obſervations on Man, vol. ii. p. 247.

dence in making it public, and not wholly concealing *(n)* from whom I received it.

'To enumerate Dr. Prieſtley's diſco-
'veries, would in fact be, to enter into a
'detail of moſt of thoſe that have been
'made within the laſt 15 years. How many
'inviſible fluids, whoſe exiſtence evaded
'the ſagacity of foregoing ages, has he made
'known to us? The very air we breathe,
'he has taught us to analyze, to examine,
'to improve: a ſubſtance ſo little known,
'that even the preciſe effect of reſpiration
'was an enigma, until he explained it. He
'firſt made known to us the proper food
'of vegetables, and in what the difference
'between theſe and animal ſubſtances
'conſiſted. To him, pharmacy is in-
'debted

(*n*) ——— well known to the philoſophical world by his own diſcoveries; who lately left this country on private concerns of his family. To myſelf, and to the friends of ſcience and truth in general, on this ſide the water, he is a great loſs, but his native land will be the gainer: a chriſtian from deep inquiry and conviction; and a worſhipper of the one only true God, and parent of the univerſe.

'debted for the method of making artifi-
'cial mineral waters, as well as for a ſhorter
'method of preparing other medicines;
'metallurgy, for more powerful and cheaper
'ſolvents; and chemiſtry, for ſuch a va-
'riety of diſcoveries, as it would be tedious
'to recite: diſcoveries, which have new-
'modelled that ſcience, and drawn to it,
'and to this country, the attention of all
'Europe. It is certain, that ſince the year
'1773, the eye and regards of all the learn-
'ed bodies in Europe, have been directed
'to this country by his means. In every
'philoſophical treatiſe his name is to be
'found, and in almoſt every page. They
'all own that moſt of their diſcoveries are
'due, either to the repetition of his diſ-
'coveries, or to the hints ſcattered through
'his works.'

It has indeed ſometimes happened, that profound mathematicians and philoſophers, through a confined attention to that kind of evidence, which is ſtrictly demonſtrative, have become incompetent judges of thoſe probable arguments, affording no leſs certainty, by which a divine revelation

is proved, and its doctr es aſcertained ; and have either intirely rejected, or reaſoned very imperfectly concerning it. But Dr. Prieſtley's genius is equal to all ſubjects; and remarkable for ſelecting only the ſtrongeſt and moſt ſuitable arguments upon every one that he handles, and applying and arranging them with exquiſite method and ſimplicity ; ſo as to be intelligible to every capacity, and ſeldom to fail to work conviction in the unprejudiced mind. It may indeed be ſaid of his writings, as has been ſaid of ſome others, that perſons may learn from them to reaſon juſtly without having recourſe to formal treatiſes of logic. I ſpeak not this in the way of panegyric. I could name ſome of the firſt maſters of reaſoning in this kingdom, and who are allowed to be ſo, who attribute this excellency to our author's compoſitions. And hence it is, that as his ſingular probity, and his diſcernment, will never let him undertake a ſubject which he does not believe himſelf capable of ſupporting by juſt argument, it has ſeldom failed but that in moſt of his controverſies, he has generally had the voice of all intelligent

ligent and unbiaſſed readers with him. And I cannot ſuffer myſelf to doubt of finding the ſame diſpoſitions in you, with regard to the charges, which Dr. Horne, in your names, advances againſt him; which we are proceeding to conſider.

SECTION IV.

OF THE CHARGES AGAINST DR. PRIESTLEY FOR HAVING NO FIXED CREED.

Important truth not to be concealed. Offence wrongly taken at Dr. Prieſtley's *publication of the progreſs of his inquiries. Impartial inquirers have no fixed creed. Service of Dr.* Prieſtley's *writings to the cauſe of the goſpel. Reaſons of Dr.* Horne's *not ſeeing this.*

THE famous Burnet of the Charter-houſe, after having delivered his own ſentiments, with great force of argument, from reaſon and ſcripture, and in a moſt affecting ſtrain, againſt the eternity of future puniſhnents, cloſes the whole with this caution; with

which he ſays ſome of the ancient fathers, who were of the ſame ſentiment, always accompanied the declaration of it:

(*o*) "However freely (ſays he to his 'readers) you may thus ſee cauſe to think 'concerning hell, and the future puniſh-'ments of the wicked, in your own breaſt 'and in your cloſet; you muſt be careful 'to uſe the commonly received language 'concerning them, in public and before the 'people. For the bulk of mankind are ſo 'violently

(*o*) "De inferno, et futuris impiorum ſuppliciis, hæc dixiſſe ſufficiat, modo ſubjicias illud monitum, quod a præfatis patribus, ubi hoc tractant argumentum, ſæpius adhiberi ſolet. Nimirum, quicquid apud te ſtatuas, intus et in pectore, de his pœnis, eternis vel non: recepta doctrina verbiſque utendum eſt cum populo, et cum peroratur ad vulgus; præceps nempe in vitium, et ſola formidine pœnæ a malis abſterrendum. Præterea, inter bonos etiam ſunt infantes et adulti, *lacte*, vel *cibo ſolidiore*, pro cujuſque viribus, *alendi*. Horum non minus habenda eſt ratio; nec temere mutanda eſt parvulorum aut infirmorum diæta, ne intemperies oriatur, et in morbos incidant. Progreſſum providentiæ, in mundo ſenſim ad perfectionem promovendo, et illuminanda gente humana, ſemper ante oculos, ſemper in conſiliis habere oportet: atque pari paſſu procedendum in ſtudiis et conatibus noſtris, donec eo perventum fuerit, ut quod *in aurem audivimus, in ſolariis prædicare liceat.*"

Burnet de Stat. mort. et reſurgent. p. 311, 312.

'violently bent on vice, that they are only 'to be reſtrained and affrighted from it by 'a dread of puniſhment. Even among thoſe 'that are better characters, you are to at- 'tend to their caſe, and *feed them with milk*, '(1 Cor. iii. 2.) *or ſtrong meat*, as may ſuit, 'and not raſhly alter the diet of weak chriſ- 'tians, leſt they be hurt by the change. 'And herein we are to imitate the methods 'of divine providence in enlightening man- 'kind, and bringing its ſchemes to per- 'fection; and to manage the fruits of our 'ſtudies and reſearches in the ſame way, 'till things come to that ſtate, in the which, 'what *we have heard with the ear, we may 'ſpeak on the houſe-top*"

This learned perſon's reaſons for caution and ſilence upon this ſubject, however well intended, have ſomething unſound in them; and are by no means to be approved. For,

1. You are on no account to declare or to teach any thing, which you do not believe to be true. But this is what he recommends, viz. to hold forth the popular language concerning hell-torments, when you do not believe them to be eternal.

2. On

2. On the contrary, when you are led to treat upon the ſubject, you ſhould with mildneſs and good temper, if it be your perſuaſion, ſhew, that the language of the ſcriptures is miſunderſtood, when men would infer from it the endleſs duration of the ſufferings of wicked men; and alſo that ſuch a doctrine is wholly incompatible with the ideas we cannot but entertain of the infinite goodneſs of God: and there you are to leave it, without fear of any harm to the morals of chriſtians reſulting from it, and without any doubt but that the moſt laſting puniſhments certainly denounced againſt the evil and impenitent, though they be far from eternal, cannot but have effect upon all that are capable of being deterred from their vicious practices.

3. With reſpect to the methods of divine providence, they are no rule to us in ſuch things. Our time is ſhort, and our buſineſs is to make known important truth to others, as it is diſcovered to us. It has been owing to a prudence of this kind not always to be commended, that there is ſtill ſo much darkneſs and ſuperſtition among chriſtians, and the ſcripture ſo little underſtood.

Happily

Happily for mankind, and for the progreſs of truth, others have thought and acted differently; and eſpecially Dr. Prieſtley, in our own times.

The fact with regard to him was this, as appears from his writings and incidental accounts of himſelf.

Upon that examination, which it becomes every chriſtian to make, of what was inſtilled into him in his youth, from the ſacred writings, concerning the Being that made him, and his expectations from him, he ſaw the ſtrongeſt reaſons to believe the bible itſelf to contain an authentic hiſtory of divine extraordinary communications to mankind; but has found cauſe, from time to time, to alter his opinions concerning many things that had been taught him out of it, and particularly concerning one thing held the moſt ſacred of all others, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Chriſt.

He would not have acted the part of a rational being, if he had taken things of ſuch importance for true, as others delivered them to him, without examining the ſcriptures, whether they were ſo or not.

And

And he would not have done his duty as an honeſt man, if on receiving further light, he had continued to hold forth and profeſs his former opinions, which he was perſuaded had no foundation in the word of God.

He was moreover convinced, that it was highly incumbent on him, for the honour of true religion and the good of mankind, not to ſtifle the light of truth which he had thus diſcovered, but to publiſh it to others, that they might alſo be benefited by it. And every lover of truth will be thankful to him; eſpecially as he has always fairly and minutely given his reaſons to the public for any important change of religious ſentiment, and thereby enabled others to judge, whether it has been made on good and ſufficient grounds; and has invited all to ſhew, if in any reſpect he hath miſrepreſented facts, or reaſoned wrong upon them, or miſtaken the meaning of ſcripture.

But it having happened, that with the openneſs which is almoſt peculiar to him, and

and in the freedom of debate with his friend Dr. Price, where he is mentioning the little fondneſs he had for the opinions he had received from his education, and how much he had receded from them, he concludes with ſaying, *I will not pretend to ſay, when my creed will be fixed*; it is not to be imagined, with what eagerneſs Dr. Horne ſeizes this, and runs diviſions upon it without end, and would perſuade you, that the author of ſuch a declaration muſt certainly be a man from whom no one can learn any thing or depend upon, as having no fixed creed whatſoever. But indeed in the ſenſe in which Dr. Prieſtley declares this, you will find that good man, archbiſhop Tillotſon agreeing with him, as will alſo every perſon of good ſenſe, and calm reflexion, and that is under no wrong bias. For that worthy prelate, in his funeral ſermon for Dr. Whichcot, having mentioned it as cuſtomary with learned men, at a certain age, " to *make their underſtand-*
" *ings*, as he expreſſes it, and to fix and
" ſettle their judgments on important
" points, from which they were not to
" recede;"

" recede ;" he commends his (*p*) deceaſed friend, that ' *he was ſo wiſe as to be willing* ' *to learn to the laſt* ;' i. e. he had never any fixed creed.

I am

(*p*) I would beg leave to recommend to you a prayer of admirable ſimplicity, compoſed by archbiſhop Tillotſon, and preſerved to us in his works. It ſhews the excellency of his ſpirit, and how far he was from approving an unſearching temper in the things relating to God.

O Lord God of truth, I humbly beſeech thee to enlighten my mind by thy Holy Spirit, that I may diſcern the true way to eternal ſalvation, and to free me from all prejudice and paſſion, from every corrupt affection and intereſt, that may either blind or ſeduce me in my ſearch after it.

Make me impartial in my inquiry after truth, and ready whenever it is diſcovered to me to receive it in the love of it, to obey it from the heart, and to practiſe it in my life, and to continue ſtedfaſt in the profeſſion of it to the end of my days.

I perfectly reſign myſelf, O Lord, to thy conduct and direction, in confidence that thy mercy and goodneſs is ſuch, that thou wilt not ſuffer thoſe who ſincerely deſire to know the truth, and rely upon thy goodneſs, finally to miſcarry. And if in any thing, which concerns the true worſhip and ſervice of thee my God, and the everlaſting happineſs of my ſoul, I am in any error and miſtake, I earneſtly beg of thee to convince me of it, and to lead me into the way of truth, and to confirm and eſtabliſh me in it daily more and more.

And I beſeech thee O Lord, always to preſerve in me a great compaſſion and ſincere charity towards thoſe that are in ignorance

I am ſorry to have occaſion here to obſerve, that upon the moſt important of all ſubjects, even with reſpect to the God you are to worſhip, Dr. Horne is not willing to permit you, to make free inquiry, or to have any underſtanding of your own, firſt or laſt: but all is to be ready made for you, by thoſe who are ſuppoſed to have conſulted the ſcriptures long before you were born, and to have ſettled the ſenſe in which you are to take every thing in them, upon this ſubject, as well as many others of great moment.

But this is not all the bad tendency which Dr. Horne finds in this innocent ſaying of Dr. Prieſtley's, that *he knew not when his creed would be fixed.* From his departing from the commonly received opinion concerning

rance of thy truth, beſeeching thee to take pity on them, and to bring them to the knowlege of it, that they may be ſaved.

And becauſe our bleſſed Saviour hath promiſed, that all who do his will ſhall know his doctrine, grant, o Lord, that I may never knowingly offend thee in any thing, or neglect to do what I know to be thy will and my duty.

Grant, o heavenly Father, theſe my humble and hearty requeſts, for his ſake who is the way, the truth, and the life, my bleſſed ſaviour and redeemer, Jeſus Chriſt.

cerning the plenary inſpiration of the ſacred writers, and of conſequence maintaining that in all things written by them, they are not alike infallible, the preſident of Magdalen ſpares not to inſinuate, that this may lead at laſt to deny (q) the reſurrection of Chriſt, and of courſe renounce chriſtianity and the the bible. Nay, by his way of mentioning an advocate of atheiſm, whom Dr. Prieſtley had confuted, he drops a grave hint for you to take up, as if he might end there himſelf.

And this is, without reſerve, thrown out againſt the man, whom you may not heſitate to call one of the moſt able defenders of the being of a God, and of the truth of the divine revelation contained in the hebrew and chriſtian ſcriptures, that the world ever ſaw. This, impartial poſterity will confeſs, however ſome now gainſay, and ſpeak evil of him.

And permit me to ſay, that much as you may have acquired from the inſtructions

(q) Letter of an undergraduate to Dr. Prieſtley, p. 19, &c.

ſtructions of your tutors, or your own reading, you will find that Dr. Prieſtley's *Inſtitutes of natural and revealed Religion,* will furniſh you with many curious, original, uſeful obſervations, and new trains of reaſoning, to ſettle your belief of the exiſtence of one firſt cauſe of all things, the ſole omnipotent creator and parent of the univerſe, and raiſe your devout affections towards him, and alſo to confirm your faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and increaſe your thankfulneſs for that diſcovery of the divine ineffable goodneſs, and deſigns for your everlaſting happineſs, which we have by the goſpel.

Dr. Prieſtley's *Hiſtory of the corruptions of Chriſtianity,* will give you the greateſt ſatisfaction, as you will there ſee traced out, with vaſt labour and exquiſite diſcernment, how this divine religion of the goſpel was at firſt, through the prejudices of thoſe who received it, unavoidably depraved by many polytheiſtic errors and ſuperſtitions, although its founder, the bleſſed Jeſus, taught the worſhip of the Father alone in ſpirit and in truth, and that his favour was no

other way to be ſecured, but by a perſeverance in or timely return to the paths of virtue, and a holy obedience. You will there alſo with pleaſure ſee the preſent tendency of things in the chriſtian world, towards a reſtoration of the true religion of the goſpel, and its final eſtabliſhment on on the firmeſt foundations.

And his *Letters to a philoſophical Unbeliever*, Part i. ii. a work ſingular in its kind, and moſt admirable, will quiet your minds with reſpect to the objections which have been raiſed againſt the being of a God, and a providence, and the divine miſſions of Moſes and of Jeſus; and prepare you to meet the powerful arguments, which are frequently urged againſt them both, the latter eſpecially, in company, as well as in books; which you will perceive to have their ſource and all their ſtrength, not from the goſpel itſelf, but from the groundleſs ſuperſtitious doctrines grafted upon it.

And now if you aſk, how a ſcholar and eminent divine, can overlook this and *much more*, which has been accompliſhed by this celebrated writer, for the vindication and

ſupport

ſupport of divine revelation and the goſpel, and ſtrive to perſuade you that he has done harm to the cauſe, and is even verging towards infidelity and atheiſm; it is eaſy to perceive, that Dr. Horne's prejudices deprive him of all true judgment in the caſe, by making him place the religion of Chriſt in thoſe things and doctrines, in which its divine author did not place it, and indeed knew nothing of; ſo that he holds it to be a duty by all means to oppoſe Dr. Prieſtley, who denies many of thoſe things, which the other believes to be the moſt ſacred parts of the goſpel, to be any part of it at all; and in particular maintains, that there is no God but one, the ſingle perſon of the univerſal Father alone; and that Jeſus Chriſt is a creature of that God, like all the reſt of us, but moſt highly favoured and diſtinguiſhed by him.

From this account you will form your own judgments, and what abatements are to be made in Dr. Horne's repreſentations of Dr. Prieſtley's ſentiments. In p. 8. 9. of his undergraduate's letter, he produces a long liſt of accuſations, which ſhew his light

manner of exhibiting Dr. Prieſtley to you, and of putting, in the moſt odious light, his freedom in criticizing the ſcriptures; in which you will find that other eminent and eſteemed writers have taken as great liberties as he. I ſhall take notice of every thing of any moment alleged by him, beginning with the ſubject of inſpiration of the ſcriptures. But let us firſt hear his charges.

'Scripture, (ſays Dr. Horne,) you 'ſeem prepared to diſcard, whenever it does 'not pleaſe you. Some chapters of the 'goſpel by St. Matthew, and that by St. 'Luke, are gone, becauſe they teach the 'miraculous conception. Paul, as you 'have given the world to underſtand, does 'not always know what he is about, but 'ſometimes reaſons inconcluſively.—You 'ſay, *all that Paul could know about Adam, 'and the effects of his ſin, he muſt have learned from the books of Moſes, which are as 'open to us as they were to him:* you mean, 'I preſume, (for otherwiſe the obſervation 'is made to no purpoſe) that our expoſitions 'are of equal authority with his. And then 'your words tell us, that you *think yourſelf at 'liberty to conſider the hiſtory which Moſes has*

'*us*

'*given us of the creation and fall of man, as* '*the beſt he could collect from tradition.* You 'add, *in my opinion there are alſo many marks* '*of its being a very lame account, and far* '*from ſolving the difficulty which it ſeems* '*intended to anſwer, namely, the introduction* '*of death and calamity into the world.*—The 'prophets and apoſtles,' Dr. Horne continues to remark, 'certainly do not inform 'us, at every turn, that they have received 'from God that information which they 'are about to communicate to us: but 'we are aſſured, 2 Pet. i. 21. that *holy men* '*ſpake of old as they were moved by the holy* '*ghoſt*; and 2 Tim. iii. 16. that *all ſcripture* '*is given by inſpiration of God.*'

SECTION V.

What is the juſt idea of the inſpiration of the ſacred writers. The certain ground upon which we go in this way of conſidering it; and its advantages. Dr. Horne's *great error with reſpect to the particular inſpiration of the writer of the epiſtle to the Hebrews.*

As the kind and degree of divine influence, or inſpiration, under which the ſa-

cred writers compoſed their reſpective books, is the hinge on which this accuſation turns, I ſhall endeavour to lay before you ſuch an account of the matter, as may be of ſome aſſiſtance to form your own judgments upon it, before I conſider the particular allegations, which you are ſuppoſed to bring againſt Dr. Prieſtley.

The ſacred writers of the New Teſtament, (and what is ſaid of them is applicable, *cæteris paribus*, to the writers of the Old Teſtament,) had not the matter they treat of, nor the words, dictated in a ſupernatural manner to them, by which they were to expreſs themſelves, in penning down their reſpective hiſtories of the goſpel of Chriſt; but were left to collect facts from their proper ſources, and to tell them in their own way.

Thus St. Luke, in the preface to his goſpel, deſires that his account of things may be received by the friend to whom he addreſſes it, as worthy of credit, for his diligence in gathering it from thoſe who had been eye-witneſſes, and miniſters of the word. If he had believed that inſpiration had been neceſſary to give credit to his narrative, he would not have failed to have mentioned,

that

that he had his knowlege and information immediately from God.

The ſame may be ſaid of all the evangeliſts, with reſpect to the different ſubjects which they record. And had it occurred to them, as it did to Luke, to take notice of this circumſtance; they would have told us, that they had been careful to put down with fidelity and exactneſs, what they had ſeen and heard themſelves, reſpecting their divine maſter Jeſus, as alſo what they had learned from other competent witneſſes.

The four evangeliſts therefore, after having acquainted themſelves, in the beſt manner they could, with the life, miracles, and diſcourſes of Chriſt, compiled their ſeveral goſpels, in the form we now have them; with great judgment confining themſelves intirely to the repreſentation of facts, without mixing their own opinions, or deſcanting upon them.

This has been, and I believe is, the ſentiment of judicious chriſtians, on this nice ſubject: whilſt others have pleaded for what they call, a *plenary* inſpiration of the ſacred writers; i. e. that both in the things re-

lated, and the language in which they conveyed them, they were under an immediate divine influence and direction.

In the preface to his harmony of the four evangeliſts, Dr. Prieſtley has ſhewn, that this high notion of the inſpiration of the ſcriptures, of the goſpel in particular, the ſubject he is treating upon, is contrary to fact; the narratives of the different evangeliſts being not written with that perfect conſiſtency and agreement with each other, which ſuch a ſuppoſition neceſſarily requires.

And moreover, 'as it ſeems to have been the plan of divine providence, never to furniſh miracles, where natural cauſes were ſufficient to procure the deſired effect;" ſuch a prodigious divine *apparatus* of a particular inſpiration of each ſacred writer was wholly unneceſſary in the preſent caſe, as all the great ends of the goſpel, and its credibility, are ſatisfactorily ſecured by the teſtimony of men of the moſt unqueſtionable integrity, who were about our Saviour's perſon, or of others who converſed with them; who drew up different relations of the ſame facts concerning him, diſagreeing only in ſuch minute

nute particulars as might be expected from men who wrote without communication with each other, and ſuch as ſerves to corroborate and confirm their general and agreeing teſtimony to every thing of importance.

And he remarks in the ſame way, that ſince providence has thought proper to intruſt this valuable depoſit of the ſcriptures in human hands, to the fidelity of uninſpired tranſcribers and printers for near 1800 years, it cannot be thought inconſiſtent with the ſame plan, to have it conveyed to us in a ſimilar manner from the beginning: the apoſtles being naturally as capable of relating and writing an account of what they heard and ſaw, as other perſons would be to copy the account after them.'

In Section xi. of Obſervations prefixed to his 'Harmony of the evangeliſts,' Dr. Prieſtley has ſuggeſted a probable account, how theſe ſacred writers might be poſſeſſed of an exact knowlege of the things related by them, though their narrative of them was drawn up ſeveral years after the events themſelves; and be qualified to compoſe their hiſtories, ſuch as we now have them.

If

If, without offence, I may be allowed to adviſe, you ſhould by all means procure this valuable work of Dr. Prieſtley's; not only for your information and ſatisfaction on this weighty point of the inſpiration of the ſcriptures, and what will ſave you much trouble in peruſing other authors upon the ſubject; but as containing much uſeful matter, needful for the right underſtanding of the goſpel-hiſtory, ſome of it not to be met with in any other books.

Nor is the account here given, too depreciating, or ſuch as reduces the writings of the evangeliſts to the level of common hiſtories. For they may ſtill be termed in ſome degree *inſpired* writings, as they contain a faithful detail of the doctrine of Chriſt, which he received immediately from God.

So that when we read the teachings of Chriſt in the goſpel, or his doctrine as held forth in the epiſtles of his firſt choſen followers, it is the ſame as if God himſelf ſpake to us. And we know the doctrine of the apoſtles, in their ſeveral writings, to be from God, by its agreement with that which

which Chriſt delivered; or by their informing us, whenever they declare any new doctrine, that they received it by a particular revelation made to themſelves. So St. Paul, for example, informs the chriſtians of Corinth, that a part of the human ſpecies *(r)* would be exempted from the common ſtroke of death, which all others were deſtined to feel; namely, thoſe his true and virtuous followers who ſhould be found alive at the ſecond coming of Chriſt; when by the operation of the divine power, they would be changed, and rendered incorruptible and immortal, at the ſame moment, with the innumerable dead ~~ſhould be~~ raiſed to life, who had been, a longer or ſhorter time, aſleep in their graves.

This way of conſidering the inſpiration of the penmen of the New Teſtament, as confined to the doctrine which they received

(r) Behold I ſhew you a myſtery; all of us ſhall not ſleep, *but we ſhall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump, (for the trumpet ſhall ſound) and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible*; *and* we ſhall be changed, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

ceived from Chriſt, you will find to approve itſelf to you, the more you reflect upon it, and to be moſt agreeable to fact, and the real ſtate of the ſacred writings.

We are thus alſo left more at liberty, and more capable of defending our holy religion, when we are not anſwerable for the juſtneſs of every word, and the propriety and aptneſs of every quotation in the New Teſtament made from the Old, or the accuracy of the writer's arguments in all reſpects. We may then conſider the apoſtles, what they really appear to have been, as men of good ſenſe and the moſt upright diſpoſitions, who would not to gain the whole world advance any thing they did not believe to be true; but who alſo were liable to prejudices, and fallible, like other men, and therefore might eaſily be miſtaken in their reaſonings on incidental ſubjects, and in the interpretation and application of their antient divine law. And any ſmall miſtake of this kind would not affect the competency and ſufficiency of their evidence to the moſt important facts on which the goſpel ſtands; viz. the miracles by which

which our Lord proved his divine miſſion; the diſcovery made by him of the will of the heavenly Father of all, and the way to ſecure his favour; the aſſurance of a reſurrection to a future immortal life after death given by him, and confirmed by his own reſurrection. Nay, high divine powers communicated, or abſolute infallibility in their reaſonings, would add nothing to the apoſtles' teſtimony concerning plain facts, which depends on quite different circumſtances.

Dr. Horne, in one place, gives a ſpecimen of his own method of conſidering the inſpiration of the apoſtles, in which he makes you parties as uſual; but from the little that has now been ſuggeſted to you, I apprehend you will be far from approving the way he takes.

Speaking of St. Paul's epiſtle to the Hebrews, he calls it, p. 40, 'a *divine expoſition* 'of *the Old Teſtament*, and not one of the leaſt 'among the many inſtances of God's good-'neſs to his church, that he has cauſed it 'to be written and handed down to us.'

For

For this however, you have nothing but his own aſſertion, which, by itſelf, can be of no weight.

His notion is built upon the ſuppoſition, that the law of Moſes was divinely contrived, and appointed, to prefigure, and denote the things concerning Chriſt, and the goſpel; but in an obſcure manner, and covered with a veil, which he imagines St. Paul here to remove, by a ſupernatural knowlege communicated to him.

But as we do not find that Moſes, or the prophets, teach or intimate any thing of the kind, it is not credible, that their divine law ſhould have ſuch an important ſignification, and be wholly concealed from them.

And ſtill farther, St. Paul himſelf never mentions that he had any particular revelation upon this point, to acquaint him, that ſuch was the divine intention in the appointment of their law and ſacrifices: ſo that what Dr. Horne ſpeaks with ſuch confidence concerning it, ſeems to be mere imagination, without any foundation.

How

How then, you will inquire, are we to judge of the intent of all theſe references to the moſaic law, in this epiſtle to the hebrews, and what degree of inſpiration are we to attribute to it?

With reſpect to the latter inquiry, it is to be obſerved, that in all theſe occaſional writings of the apoſtles, no new revelation is to be expected in them, unleſs when expreſsly pointed out by themſelves; which we do not find here done by St. Paul. But he, as well as the other apoſtles, being fully informed of the goſpel-doctrine, and deeply impreſſed with the importance of it, would always be able, without any *immediate* divine aſſiſtance, to ſtate, and explain and apply it, to any particular purpoſe, caſe, or emergency, that called for it, either in preaching or writing. And their doctrine, thus delivered, could not be called mere human teaching, or the word of man, but that which Jeſus Chriſt received by inſpiration, and communicated to his followers, *the word of God.*

The ſpecial occaſion of his inditing this epiſtle, and the perſons to whom it was ſent,

ſent, and their ſituation, will unfold the reaſon of that continual reference to the moſaic inſtitution, which we meet with in this epiſtle, beyond any other of his writings.

Addreſſing himſelf then, as is generally acknowleged, to hebrew chriſtians, reſiding in Judea, in dangerous times, juſt before the breaking out of their fatal war againſt the romans, when they were under many temptations to deſert the goſpel, his chief deſign is to confirm them in their adherence to it. And the argument moſt likely to turn them back to judaiſm, being this, that the goſpel tended to aboliſh their divine religion, their prieſthood and ſacrifices, without giving them an equivalent in lieu of it, this eminent teacher makes it his buſineſs to ſhew the ſuperiority of Chriſt, in character and office, to Moſes; and even to angels, by whoſe inſtrumentality they ſuppoſed their law to have been given; and teaches at large, by compariſon, that Chriſt was a better high prieſt than any under their law, and his death, or ſacrifice, more efficacious and acceptable to God, than their legal ſacrifices.

Not

Not that Chriſt was properly a prieſt, or his death properly a ſacrifice: but our apoſtle, a jew writing to jews, ſpeaks to them in their own way, in terms of alluſion to their old religion and its ceremonies; and intended to ſignify this only by it, that whatever advantages they ſuppoſed that they had from their high prieſts and ſacrifices, chriſtians derived far more and greater from Chriſt.

That this was the apoſtle's intent, in applying ſo much of the jewiſh hiſtory and ritual to his preſent purpoſe, I perſuade myſelf you will find on the matureſt examination to be the truth; and that in this way of interpreting his letter to his countrymen, you have ſome ſure rule and plan by which to proceed; but in the method which Dr. Horne's prejudices lead him to embrace, you are wholly left to ingenious conjecture, and imagination.

And though there will ſoon be an opportunity of farther inquiry into the ſuppoſed prieſtly character of Chriſt, his interceſſion, and making atonement for us, you will perhaps at preſent ſee cauſe to agree with me, that

there is no ground for that extreme diſſatisfaction, in which you are made to join with the preſident of Magdalen, at the following paſſage which he cites from the ſequel to the apology on reſigning the vicarage of Catterick, p. 88. 89. 'Our Lord never 'called himſelf an high prieſt, nor is 'ſpoken of as ſuch by any of the four hiſ-'torians of his life and of the firſt propaga-'tion of his religion among jews and gen-'tiles; nor is he ſo ſtiled by any of the 'writers of the New Teſtament, except the 'author of this epiſtle to the hebrews. From 'whence we may conclude, that neither 'Chriſt, nor the evangeliſts eſteemed this 'to be any real part of his character, or 'needful to be attended to by his followers.'

SECTION VI.

SECTION VI.

Moſes's account of the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, much miſrepreſented, through the bias of wrong religious ſyſtems. It is probable, according to Dr. Prieſtley's *conjecture, that he did not receive that account from a particular divine inſpiration. How it is to be interpreted. Juſtification of this way of interpretation, from ſimilar inſtances in ſcripture, eſpecially, Chriſt's temptation. A farther confirmation of the probability, that Moſes drew up his hiſtory of the fall, in the manner here ſtated.*

Dr. Prieſtley, in his letters to Dr. Price, p. 158. 159. remarks, that that worthy perſon had appeared to him, without any juſt ground, to found, what he calls, the neceſſity of Chriſt's incarnation, and the efficacy of his death, on the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents; obſerving to him, that, 'if the '*fall* of man, whatever it was, had been an 'event, on which the whole chriſtian ſcheme 'was thus founded, we might have expected

'a more expreſs declaration, from ſufficient 'authority, that it was ſo. But in none of 'the prophecies, in which the Meſſiah is 'announced, is there the leaſt reference to 'this cataſtrophe, which you ſuppoſe to have 'made his incarnation neceſſary. Neither 'John the Baptiſt, nor our Saviour himſelf, 'ever ſaid any thing that could lead our 'thoughts to it. And notwithſtanding the 'frequent mention that is made of *the love 'of God in the gift of his Son* by the apoſtles, 'it is never ſaid to have been to undo any 'thing that had been done at the fall, ſome 'paſſages of Paul above excepted, who calls 'Chriſt the *laſt Adam*, and makes uſe of 'terms which imply that death was intro-'duced by Adam, as eternal life is the gift 'of God by Chriſt. But you know that the 'writings of this apoſtle abound with ana-'logies and antitheſes, on which no very 'ſerious ſtreſs is to be laid.'

However contrary this account of the fall may ſound to what you have been accuſtomed to hear, it certainly deſerves your attention for the arguments from ſcripture by which it is ſupported, and ſo far as they bring conviction

viction to your minds, you will follow them. And it is a reflection, that will very naturally occur to you, whether thoſe perſons do not take in too many foreign ideas, and fancy unknown myſteries in the divine moral government, from paſſages of ſcripture ill underſtood, who make it neceſſary for a being equal to the Almighty himſelf, or one next in dignity and time to him, to interpoſe, by condeſcending to become a weak ſuffering mortal, and ſubmit to a lingering death in torments, to repair the breach of the divine law by the two firſt frail creatures of our race; before that conſiſtently with juſtice, or with we know not what other bar and obſtacle, they could be pardoned, although they ſincerely repented of their tranſgreſſion.

And it muſt be left alſo to you to judge, whether St. Paul intended his language relating to this event, to be conſtrued in a rigorous ſenſe; or would only thereby teach, in general, the heinouſneſs and fatal wide-ſpreading effects of ſin, and the high conſideration in which a virtuous obedience is held by the almighty and holy governor of

the world, in the mighty honour done to Chriſt, by being the means and inſtrument of bringing mankind to virtue and an eternal happineſs.

Dr. Prieſtley goes on to eſtabliſh his ſentiment, by obſervations on the hiſtory of the creation and fall of man, which were cited above; in which he maintains, that we are not to look upon Moſes as writing under an immediate divine influence, but as giving us the beſt account of thoſe tranſactions, that he could collect.

Upon this, Dr. Horne cries out, 'What 'is this that I hear? it is the voice of 'Chubb, of Morgan, or of Tindal? of 'Voltaire, of Hume, or of Bolingbroke?'

It is not to be wondered at that Dr. Horne's prejudices ſhould lead him to this extreme, in a caſe, where doctrines, which he fancies to lye at the foundation of the goſpel, are called in queſtion. But before he made ſuch an exclamation, it would have been the juſter way of proceeding, to have

have ſhewn wherein Dr. Prieſtley was miſtaken. However, though he takes upon him to ſpeak in your name, you will not implicitly follow his deciſions, and will not eaſily claſs an author with profeſſed unbelievers, who holds no opinions on the ſubject, but what he thinks authorized by the ſacred writings.

Dr. Prieſtley is not alone in thinking Moſes not to have compoſed his narrative of the fall of our firſt parents from any ſupernatural information, but from ſuch materials as he found handed down concerning it. Whilſt ſome have aſſerted, that the whole narrative was to be taken literally; and that, ſerpents at that time having the faculty of ſpeech, it was a real ſerpent that ſpoke to Eve, who through envy at her ſuperior ſtation, drew her into the tranſgreſſion of the divine law; and others have ſuppoſed that there was no real ſerpent, but that the devil, under that reſemblance, was the tempter, &c. which is the opinion that generally of late has prevailed; many in

all times have been perſuaded, that ſome unhappy miſconduct of our firſt progenitors, in giving way to animal pleaſure, to the neglect of the divine command, which taught them a juſt moderation of the inferior appetites, was their crime, and the groundwork of the hiſtory we have of it; but that the introduction and craft of the ſerpent, its dialogue with Eve, &c. are only the circumſtances and embelliſhments in which it is dreſſed up, theſe being feigned and invented by Moſes in the eaſtern ſtile; who probably thought it more proper, and likely to do more good, than if he had ſpoken of the matter plainly and without a figure *(r)*,

Philo the Jew, who was cotemporary with our Lord's apoſtles, ſays, it is not a fable invented at pleaſure, but an allegory, expreſſive of what really happened under feigned images,

(r) —— *and for an apple damn mankind.*
One is ſorry to ſee men of ſenſe and gravity, that might have known better, dealing in ſuch wit as this on the Moſaic account of the fall.

images, and the ſerpent is an emblem of vicious pleaſure, &c. *(t)*

The general deſign is to inform us, that ſin and diſobedience came in with the firſt parents of mankind, and was attended with fatal conſequences to them, and their poſterity. And Moſes, as became a pious, holy man, and divine lawgiver, raiſed up by providence, and ſupported in an extraordinary manner, gives the deſcription which we have of this fatal tranſgreſſion, to deter men from gratifying irregular paſſion, and to keep them in a conſtant obedience to the will of their maker.

As

(t) See the different opinions of jews and chriſtians concerning the fall, in Le Clerc's commentary and note on Gen. iii. 1. In the following words he probably declares his own opinion, which has alſo been that of many others. 'Hæc et ſimilia alii cum viderent, eò deveniendum eſſe cenſuerunt, ut agnoſceremus ex hoc ænigmate hoc tantum liquido poſſe cognoſci; primos, ſcilicet, humani generis parentes initium feciſſe peccandi, unde innumera mala ipſis eorumque poſteris incubuere. Conſtat certe humanum genus, nunc et a multis ſeculis, corruptiſſimum fuiſſe; nec initium ejus labis ullum, infra orbis originem, deprehendi poteſt. At quomodo peccatum in orbem ingreſſum ſit, adeo ut primi peccati circumſtantias perſpicue, et ſine ulla dubitandi ratione, intelligere poſſimus, indicare eorum eſſet, qui rei interfuerunt, ſi reviviſcerent.'

As to the notion commonly received, that the devil under the ſhape of a ſerpent, was the prime party concerned in this tranſaction, and the tempter of Eve; you will be perſuaded that Moſes could not intend any thing of the kind *(u)*, nor indeed believe there

(u) Plato, in his laſt book of the right ordering of a commonwealth, is for having dramatic and epic poets baniſhed out of it, as giving wrong leſſons of human conduct, and not teaching the proper government of the paſſions.

Plutarch, in a ſet treatiſe, πως δει τον νεον ποιημαλων ακουειν, finds it neceſſary to lay down many rules and cautions to youth in reading their poets, that they might receive no harm from it.

I am grieved, that it ſhould be needful to put our incomparable poet Milton, in the ſame predicament, in ſome degree, with heathen poets. For although intending to ſerve the cauſe of true religion, by his immortal poem, Paradiſe Loſt, he has contributed, and ſtill contributes, to keep numbers in great errors about it, by the countenance which the charms of his poetry give to the falſe notion of the exiſtence of a great evil ſpirit, the devil, or ſatan, and many inferior evil ſpirits under him, perpetual enemies to God and all his deſigns of goodneſs, and particularly ſworn foes to our race; and alſo the doctrine of the pre exiſtence of Chriſt; as the ſupreme God, or as one next to him which you have ſeen, and will ſtill more ſee to be void of all ſupport from the ſcripture. Young perſons are ſurprized into a belief of theſe things by reading this poet, or rather are thereby

there to be any ſuch being, if you advert to this circumſtance; that he never afterwards, throughout his five books, takes the leaſt notice of any thing of the kind. Now if he had believed, that there really exiſted ſuch an inviſible, buſy, evil and moſt powerful ſpirit, that was continually at men's ears, ſuggeſting evil thoughts, it could not be but that he would have told of it, and have warned the

thereby ſo confirmed in the popular notions early inſtilled into them, that the impreſſion is ſeldom effaced, as few ſearch the ſcriptures for themſelves to ſee what they really teach. Whereas ~~young perſons~~ youth ſhould be taught, that Milton's ſcenery concerning Chriſt and the fallen angels, is like Homer's battles of the gods; the mere fiction of the poet, grounded on paſſages of ſcripture ill underſtood. For none ever did, or ever could oppoſe the Almighty by force; and the eminence of our Saviour's character ariſes not from any priority of exiſtence in point of time, but from thoſe virtues of piety, fortitude in ſuffering for the cauſe of truth, and the moſt enlarged benevolence, which conſtitute real excellence.

It might ſeem as though Moſes had ſome notion of the exiſtence of evil ſpirits, who had communication with mankind, from what is ſaid Lev. xix. 31. *Regard not them that have familiar ſpirits*, and from xx. 6. and Deut. xviii. 11. But it is well known to ſcholars, that the word in the original ſignifies only, thoſe that *pretended* to conjure, and foretell things to come. See 1 Chron. x. 13. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6.

the Iſraelites againſt ſuch a dangerous enemy. A character ſo holy and benevolent could not have been ſilent about it.

The ſame remark you may make on the preface *(w)* to the book of Job, which ſpeaks of Satan's coming at ſtated times, into the preſence of God, of his being admitted to familiar converſe with him, and without reprehenſion encouraged and impowered to draw men to ſin and impiety; you may ſurely gather that the writer did not hold, and was far from intending to teach

(w) Now there was a day when the ſons of God came to preſent themſelves before the LORD, *and Satan came alſo among them. And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, whence comeſt thou? Then Satan anſwered the* LORD, *and ſaid, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſchoweth evil. And Satan anſwered the* LORD, *and ſaid, doth Job fear God for nought? Haſt not thou made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face. And the* LORD *ſaid unto Satan, behold all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the face of the* LORD. Job i. 6, &c.

teach, that any ſuch being really exiſted, becauſe he never afterwards throughout his book names him, where frequent opportunities preſented, had he believed that there really had been any ſuch powerful, wicked agent, laying ſnares to ſeduce frail mortals: but the whole is a poetical fiction, agreeable to the dark ſuperſtition of the times; ſtill however maintaining the ſovereignty of the Almighty author and diſpoſer of all things; that nothing happens but by his appointment and permiſſion, and under his controul.

So 1 Kings xxii. (x) is not to be conſtrued literally of Almighty God commiſſioning

(x) *And he ſaid, hear thou therefore the word of the* LORD; *I ſaw the* LORD *ſitting upon his throne, and all the hoſt of heaven ſtanding by him, on his right hand, and on his left. And the* LORD *ſaid, who ſhall perſuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one ſaid on this manner, and another ſaid on that manner. And there came forth a ſpirit, and ſtood before the* LORD, *and ſaid, I will perſuade him. And the* LORD *ſaid unto him, wherewith? And he ſaid, I will go forth, and will be a lying ſpirit to the mouth of all his prophets. And he ſaid, thou ſhalt perſuade him and prevail alſo, go forth and do it. Now therefore the* LORD HATH PUT A LYING SPIRIT IN THE MOUTH OF ALL THESE *thy prophets, and the* LORD HATH SPOKEN EVIL CONCERNING THEE. 1 Kings xxii. 19, &c.

ſioning a lying ſpirit to put a lie in the mouth of Ahab's prophets; but it is a parabolical repreſentation and prediction, in the oriental ſtile, given by a true prophet, of the willing deception that Ahab was under by means of his falſe prophets, to whom he liſtened; and who would flatter him to his ruin: which was accordingly ſoon accompliſhed.

In like manner, our Saviour's temptation in the wilderneſs, or the trial to which he was putin his religious retirement, before he entered upon his moſt important office, to prepare and fortify him for the diſcharge of it; is deſcribed with the ſame eaſtern imagery, as the fall of our firſt parents.

The ſacred writers mention the holy ſpirit of God as directing him into this ſolitude. And though the devil is named in the ſcenery, there is no ground to ſuppoſe any ſuch being concerned at all. But this beloved ſon and ſervant of God, being intruſted with ſuch mighty godlike powers from him, the temptations that would reſult from his new ſituation, to abuſe his truſt, and miſlead him from his duty; whether you conſider them

as

as the natural ſuggeſtions of his own pious thoughtful mind, or as purpoſely preſented to it by the holy ſpirit, or divine power; theſe, in the high, figurative, prophetic ſtile, are perſonified and called the devil, becauſe tending to evil, if not reſiſted. And attending to the beautiful ſtory, as carried on in this view, it is eaſy to perceive that the different images, ariſing in or preſented to our Saviour's mind, were the very trials to which as a frail human creature, he would be expoſed in the courſe of his miniſtry, and which would be his bane and deſtruction if he did not guard well againſt them; *namely*, the being too much elated by the great powers lent to him, to turn them to ſelfiſh purpoſes (*y*) of private eaſe and gratification; of giddy, wanton (*z*) vanity; or a towering pride and

(*y*) *Then was Jeſus led up of the ſpirit into the wilderneſs to be tempted of the devil. And when he had faſted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungred. And when the tempter came to him he ſaid, if thou be the Son of God,* COMMAND THAT THESE STONES BE MADE BREAD.

(*z*) *Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and ſetteth him on a wing of the temple; and ſaith unto him, if thou be the Son of God,* CAST THYSELF DOWN: for it is written, he ſhall give his angels charge concerning thee, &c.

(a) and ambition; inſtead of uſing them, as he did moſt faithfully, ſolely for the ends for which they were beſtowed, to confirm his divine miſſion and doctrine.

It will be no ſmall confirmation, that Moſes did uſe a diſcretion *(b)* of his own in his manner

(a) Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and ſheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them: and ſaith unto him, ALL THESE THINGS WILL I GIVE THEE, IF THOU WILL FALL DOWN AND WORSHIP ME, Matth. iv. 1. &c. In like manner as witches, ghoſts and apparitions, have all vaniſhed, wherever learning has lighted her torch, and men have ſought out the works of God, and diſcovered the natural cauſes of ſeemingly extraordinary appearances: ſo where the ſcriptures ſhall be ſtudied with the like freedom and diligence, it will be found, that there is no powerful unknown agent, called the devil or ſatan, no poſſeſſions of men's bodies by inferior demons, but all nature, all beings, happily under the immediate, ſole, uncontrouled direction of their infinitely wiſe and benevolent creator.

(b) Le Clerc has a curious remark on that part of the narrative, Gen. iii. 4, &c. which contains the ſerpent's dialogue with the *wife*, as he would have it rendered, and not *woman: viz.* that Moſes intended thereby to give a check to the pride of the Iſraelitiſh ladies, who took too much upon them, I ſuppoſe, upon their coming out of Egypt. Plurimi certe interpretes, inquit, tentatam volunt, abſente viro, Hevam

manner of relating the ſin of our firſt parents, ſo as might be moſt ſerviceable to keep his countrymen, for whom he wrote, in their obedience to the divine law; if it be alſo true, that he took a latitude of the like kind, for the ſame end, by advancing and by inſerting his account of a divine command, as given at the ſame early period, even before the fall, I mean the inſtitution of the ſabbath, though it was not *actually* inſtituted and appointed to be obſerved, till a very long time afterwards.

The prevailing opinion indeed has been in later times, that the ſabbath was inſtituted at the beginning of the world, and with a deſign to be obſerved by Adam and all his poſterity. But many chriſtians in early

Hevam, idque a tentatore data opera factum; quippe quam inſidioſo ſermone facilius deceptum iri, quam virum, crederet. Ut tamen non auſim inferiorem ingenio Hevam Adamo adfirmare, ita nec ſine aliqua cauſa, tentationis hanc circumſtantiam ſcriptis mandatam eſſe crediderim. Multa ſunt, in hiſce libris, ad mulierum caſtigandam ſuperbiam comparata, et ex hoc ipſo loco, ad mulierum viris conjunctarum, ſeu *uxorum* faſtum deprimendum argumentum ducit Paulus 1 Tim. ii. 14.

early times and ſince, have been of a different ſentiment. And ſuch eminent judicious ſcholars and exemplary chriſtians, as Le Clerc, Beauſobre and L'Enfant, and Mr. Archdeacon Paley in our own times, *(c)* after them;

(*c*) " In my opinion, the tranſaction in the wilderneſs above recited, Exodus xvi, was the firſt actual inſtitution of the ſabbath. For, if the ſabbath had been inſtituted at the time of the creation, as the words in *Geneſis* may ſeem at firſt ſight to import, and if it had been obſerved all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt, a period of about two thouſand years, it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occaſion of even the obſcureſt alluſion to it, ſhould occur either in the general hiſtory of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and thoſe extreamly abridged; or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the three firſt Jewiſh patriarchs, which, in many parts of the account, is ſufficiently circumſtantial and domeſtic. Nor is there in the paſſage above quoted from the ſixteenth chapter of Exodus, any intimation that the ſabbath, then appointed to be obſerved, was only a revival of an ancient inſtitution, which had been neglected, forgotten, or ſuſpended; nor is any ſuch neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah; nor, laſtly, is any permiſſion recorded to diſpenſe with the inſtitution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency.

The

them; have maintained, by ſuch evidence from the ſacred writings as is not eaſily to be ſet aſide, that though the ſeventh day is ſaid, Gen. ii. 3. to be *bleſſed by God and ſanctified*, immediately after the creation, the actual ſeparation and diſtinction of it from the other days of the week and religious obſer-

The paſſage in the ſecond chapter of Geneſis, which creates the whole controverſy upon the ſubject, is not inconſiſtent with this opinion; for as the ſeventh day was created into a ſabbath on account of God's reſting upon that day from the work of the creation, it was natural enough in the hiſtorian, when he had related the hiſtory of the creation, and of God's ceaſing from it on the ſeventh day, to add, " and God bleſſed the ſeventh day and ſanctified it, becauſe that on it he had reſted from all his work " which God created and made," although the bleſſing and ſanctification, i. e. the religious diſtinction and appropriation of that day, was not actually made till many ages afterwards. The words do not aſſert, that God *then* " bleſſed" and " ſanctified" the ſeventh day, but that he bleſſed and ſanctified it *for that reaſon*; and if any aſk, why the ſabbath or ſanctification of the ſeventh day, was *then* mentioned, if it was not *then* appointed, the anſwer is at hand; the order of connection, and not of time, introduced the mention of the ſabbath, in the hiſtory of the ſubject which it was ordained to commemorate." Archdeacon Paley's Principles of moral and political philoſophy, p. 44, &c. Vol. ii. 8vo. See alſo Beauſobre et L'Enfant, Pref. Gen. ſur le N. T. p. cxxviii. to cxxiv.

obſervance of it, was not commanded, nor did take place, till the time of the departure of the Iſraelites out of Egypt. And if ſo, which I believe you will find to be a juſt ſtatement, Moſes ſpoke of the ſabbath in Geneſis, only by way of anticipation, and of his own accord, to give the greater dignity and ſolemnity to the obſervance of the inſtitution.

SECTION VII.

Dr. Prieſtley's *freedom in mentioning ſome defects in St.* Paul's *reaſoning; and in criticizing other parts of ſcripture, countenanced by other chriſtians of acknowleged eminence; by* Eraſmus, Caſtellio, Luther, Mr. Whiſton, Dr. Durell.

WHATEVER Dr. Prieſtley remarks concerning St. Paul's reaſoning, that it is not always concluſive, eſpecially in his applications of the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, it is by no means inconſiſtent with his holding him in general to be an excellent reaſoner, as well as an enlightened divine teacher,

teacher, and ardent unwearied propagator of the truth. If the Doctor be miſtaken in what he has aſſerted on this ſubject, let his errors be publiſhed, and he will be thankful to the hand that points them out. But let him not on ſuch accounts be traduced as an unbeliever and enemy to the goſpel, when if his obſervations be juſt, he is its trueſt friend *(d)*. For it looks better, and is

(d) Mr. Tucker, in his joco-ſerious viſion, where he is introduced to Locke, and Plato, brings in the latter paſſing ſeverer cenſures on the Cilician of Tarſus, as he ſtiles St. Paul, than any thing advanced by Dr. Prieſtley; after which, the father of the academy thus farther characteriſes him.

'He (Paul) then owned, that he had received heavenly 'gifts in earthly veſſels, and though the liquor was not at 'all impaired thereby in ſubſtance or virtue, it might get 'ſome twang of the veſſel. His education at the feet of 'Gamaliel led him, and the general taſte of his country-'men, obliged him, to deal in far-fetched extravagant 'figures, which, as that taſte ſubſided, loſt all reſemblance 'with the things ſignified, but *were underſtood literally*, '*thereby leading men quite wide of his meaning*, involving 'them in uſeleſs ſubtilties, inextricable difficulties, and 'endleſs diſputes. If he had ſtaid among us, till my 'brother Locke here came up, he would certainly have 'been a great favourite with him. I am perſuaded he would 'have ſaid, nobody underſtood him ſo well ſince his own 'immediate ſcholars.' Vol. iv. 259. 260. A fine compliment, this laſt, to Mr. Locke.

more creditable for a believer in revelation to point out any defects in the ſacred writers, than to diſſemble, and leave them to be detected and boaſted of by its enemies; and neither the truth of the goſpel, nor the weight of Paul's teſtimony to it, are at all affected by his arguing ill on ſome abſtruſe incidental points introduced by him, in his epiſtles.

We find Eraſmus, in his day, condemned in the ſame way, for not reckoning St. Paul to be under a divine direction in every thing he wrote, and infallible. Eckius, the man who became Luther's adverſary ſoon after, in a letter to Eraſmus, in the year 1518, blames him likewiſe for having ſaid on Matthew ii. 'that the evangeliſt might cite 'ſome authorities from the Old Teſtament, 'by memory, and without conſulting the 'original; and that by truſting their me-'mories, they might, as often happens, fall 'into miſtakes.' And he is diſpleaſed with him, becauſe he had advanced on Acts x. 'that the apoſtles, in ſpeaking greek, mixed

'the

'the idioms of their native language with 'it; and that they learned greek not from 'Demoſthenes's *orations*, but from the po- 'pular dialect.'

To this Eraſmus replied; 'that in cen- 'ſuring the apoſtles for ſlips of memory, 'he had affirmed nothing of himſelf; but 'had only ſpoken after St. Jerom. And 'that it did not follow, that a perſon re- 'jected the ſcriptures, becauſe he frankly 'confeſſed there were ſome conſiderable 'miſtakes in them; eſpecially, 'as it was a 'point by no means ſettled how far inſpi- 'ration did extend.' Le Clerc, Biblio- theque choiſie, Tom. v. p. 233. 257.

Among many moſt learned, in the very learned times, at the beginning of the re- formation, in the foremoſt rank may be placed, Sebaſtian Chateillon, otherwiſe Caſ- tellio, or Caſtalio. To that great work he contributed by a tranſlation of the ſcriptures into the moſt claſſical latin, without loſing the ſenſe and ſtrength of the original, but the contrary: and into his mother tongue, the French, in a plain and homely ſtile. For both, he had to encounter with great oblo-

quy, and oppoſition from his cotemporaries, and from others, ſince their time; but poſterity, though late, has rendered him juſtice, and his tranſlations now are much eſteemed. What adds to his character and worth is, that in the midſt of theſe labours, he was under many diſcouragements, and often depreſſed with penury. Whilſt he filled a ſchool at Geneva, to which Calvin had recomended him, he had ſome leſſer diſagreements with that reformer, through his free ſentiments concerning the ſong of Solomon, which he thought unworthy of a place in the bible; and alſo by his denying the article of Chriſt's deſcent into hell, to ſignify his going to the place of the damned. But *(e)* Calvin kept no bounds afterwards in

(e) To make amends for things leſs favourable, which truth has compelled to relate concerning this eminent reformer, I ſhall here preſent you with ſome maſterly ſtrokes of his character of a different complexion, together with a fine ſketch of Luther, as I find them, drawn together, by no vulgar hand; who in high party-times, ſhewed himſelf in his writings, a friend to his country, and to the civil and religious rights of men. He is ſpeaking of the wretched ſtate of things, when popery reigned triumphant in this weſtern world.

'Then, ſays he, was *ſchiſm* a thing unknown; Then 'no

in his calumnies, in which he was ſeconded by his pupil Beza, againſt a man, in learning and

'no ſooner was a *heretic* heard of, than he was delivered 'to *Satan*; and little quiet had he till *conveyed* to *him* in a 'fiery chariot! Oh! *Luther! Luther!*

'But they ſay, thou would'ſt rail, would'ſt throw thy 'dirt about without diſtinction. But in this how far be-'neath the good St. *Jerom!* Nor didſt thou treat our *Henry* 'with leſs politeneſs, than *Conſtantius* and *Julian* met with 'from *reputed ſaints*. In learning equal to that army of '*foul-mouthed* adverſaries that attacked thee. Acute to an 'uncommon degree. Of a blameleſs life, and for courage, '*compared with thee* Alexander *was a coward*. In all re-'ſpects fitted waſt thou, for that great work providence 'deſigned thee. This ſacrament *(of the Lord's ſupper)* thou 'purgedſt from iniquity, but expreſſedſt thyſelf amiſs. But 'ſo long had the world been uſed to *adore* it, that it could 'not bear the *naked truth*.

'And *Calvin!* ſhall I paſs by thee without regard! Thy 'diction *attic*; elevated and juſt thy ſentiments; thy mo-'rals pure. Learn'd, ingenious, penetrating, and of found 'judgment. Not acquainted with books alone, and theo-'logical diſputes, but knowing men. Above the views 'of wealth. Reſolv'd, ſteady, indefatigable. Shewing 'what a genius and induſtry can do, in a few years, 'and in bad health. Oh! had *Servetus* lived! Not leſs 'thy blot, than *Uriah*'s wife to *David!* In the camp of '*Antichriſt*, let *D'Alva* wear the conſecrated ſword. Let '*Dominic* be ſainted. But let not *the true flock* of Chriſt pol-'lute its hands in blood, for *uſeleſs notions*. Let vice be 'puniſhed, but let thought be free, *and have it's liberal* '*courſe!*'—The Sacrament a plain and rational inſtitution, &c. by Edward Lewis, M. A. Rector of Waterſtock and Emington, in Oxfordſhire, p. 82. 83. 1751.

and genius their equal at leaſt, in ſelf-government and the cultivation of the mild, benevolent ſpirit of the goſpel, leaving them both far out of ſight. Caſtellio's great crime was, his oppoſition in converſation, as well as from the preſs, to their intolerant principles, and favourite doctrine of predeſtination, and of puniſhing heretics by the civil power, i. e. by burning them alive. The mean part which Calvin took in entrapping the unfortunate Servetus, and afterwards in procuring his condemnation, which ended by his being burn'd at a ſtake, by the magiſtrates of Geneva, will be a ſtain on his memory, never to be effaced.

But what leads me to mention Caſtellio here, is a ſhort latin MS, part of a larger work, compoſed the year in which he died, preſerved by Wetſtein at the end of the ſecond volume of his New Teſtament. If he had never written any thing more, this would have diſcovered his liberal mind, and uncommon penetration, and inſight into the true meaning of the ſacred writings. His admirable remark on the diſtinction which is to be made, in the things, which are the

ſubject

ſubject matter of the New Teſtament, furniſhes a full juſtification of what Dr. Prieſtley, and others, have advanced, relating to the partial inſpiration of the ſacred writers, and is a ſufficient apology for any faults, miſtakes, diſagreements, or defective reaſonings, which may happen to be found in them. I ſhall give an engliſh verſion of this precious rellique, putting the original in the margin, that you may the better form your judgment of both. He had generally a flowing elegant latin pen, though here he ſeems to have attended leſs to the ſtile than the ſenſe, being ſtudious to make that perſpicuous and ſtrong.

Wetſtein tells us, that Caſtellio's title of the work, was *De arte dubitandi et confitendi, ignorandi et ſciendi*; *i. e.* of the art of doubting and of being aſſured, the art of ignorance and knowlege. The title itſelf has more in it to be learned, than you find in many large books. For it is no ordinary attainment, to know, when to doubt, and when to be aſſured; and when to be ignorant. The greater part never own their doubting, or being ignorant of any thing.

Cœptum

Cœptum ineunte anno 1563.

LIB. I. CAP. XII.

QUOD attinet ad diſcordiam, aut etiam repugnantiam, quæ videtur eſſe, ſacrarum literarum, ſciendum eſt, eam diſcordiam aut verborum eſſe, aut rerum; ac de verbis primum dicemus. Verborum diſcordia aut librariorum eſt aut authorum, &c.

CAP. XIV.

SED in rerum diſcrepantia major exiſtit difficultas, et de qua alioquin tacere quam loqui mallem, ad vitandam vel infirmiorum offenſionem, vel iniquiorum invidiam, quæ in hoc argumento vix ac ne vix quidem videtur poſſe evitari; verum quia ſine hujus explicatione inſtituto meo ſatisfacere, et latentem in rebus, ad conſcientiarum tranquillitatem neceſſariis, veritatem eruere non poſſum, audendum eſt. Interea ab infirmioribus peto, ut rem ſæpius perpendant antequam judicent; multa

Begun at the commencement of the year 1563.

BOOK I. CHAP. XII.

WITH reſpect to any ſeeming diſagreement, or even contradiction, in the ſacred writings, it is to be noted, that it muſt either be, in words or in things. Diſagreement in words, is either the fault of the tranſcribers, or from the authors themſelves, &c. (Here I omit ſome juſt and moſt ingenious remarks, haſtening to what is ſtill of more importance.)

CHAP. XIV.

BUT the greateſt difficulty is, where the diſagreement is in things themſelves. Concerning which, to avoid giving offence to the weak, and exciting the ill will of others who are leſs candid, I ſhould be inclined to ſay nothing at all. Yet I muſt take courage and make the attempt, ſince otherwiſe I cannot execute my deſign, and draw out to light the truth in ſuch points as are neceſſary for the quiet of men's conſciences. In the mean while, I intreat it as a favour of my weaker brethren, that they weigh the matter well, before they finally decide upon it: for

many

multa enim prima fronte, quia nova ſunt, diſplicent, quæ poſtea diligentius conſiderata placent et probantur.

Igitur primum omnium illud ſciendum eſt, in ſacris literis quatuor eſſe orationis genera, de quibus, quia loquitur obiter Paulus, ejus verba in 1 Cor. xiv. hic ſubjiciam: ‘ alioquin ‘ fratres, inquit, ſi ego vos alienis linguis al- ‘ locutum veniam, quid vobis prodero, niſi ‘ inſit in oratione mea patefactio, aut cognitio, ‘ aut vaticinatio, aut doctrina?’ *Patefactionem* appellat, ſi quid homini divinitus patefactum eſt. *Vaticinatio* eſt alioquin eadem cum patefactione, niſi quod conjuncta eſt cum mentis agitatione atque permotione. *Cognitionem* interpretor eam, quæ ex viſis aut auditis efflorescit. *Doctrinam* appellari a Paulo arbitror eam, quam homini literæ et ratio conferunt. Hanc illic eſſe mentem Pauli, nemo, opinor, negabit: certe etiamſi illa nec Paulus nec quiſquam alius dixiſſet, res ipſa per ſe vera eſt, videlicet hæc orationis quatuor eſſe genera

many things, which we are prejudiced againſt at firſt on account of their novelty, gain our approbation and pleaſe us, after more mature conſideration.

Firſt then it is to be attended to, that, in the ſacred writings, there are four ſorts of ſubjects of diſcourſe. And as Paul incidentally mentions them in one place, I ſhall quote them, 1 *Cor. xiv.* 6. Now, brethren, if I come unto you ſpeaking in foreign languages, what ſhall I profit you, unleſs I ſpeak by revelation, or by knowlege, or by prophecying, or by doctrine.

Revelation, *the apoſtle calls, what is made known in an extraordinary manner by almighty God.*

Prophecying *is the ſame, only received ſomewhat differently.*

By knowledge, *I underſtand what grows out of what we ſee and hear.*

Doctrine, *I call that which we gather from learning, and our reaſoning faculties.*

This, I apprehend, no one will deny to be Paul's real meaning. Indeed, if neither Paul, nor any one elſe had ſaid it, the thing would in itſelf be true, that theſe are the four ſubjects

of

genera ſacrorum ſcriptorum; ſic enim ſcripſerunt, ut alioquí loqui inter ſeſe de rebus divinis ſoliti erant, neque enim alia mens aut ſcientia aut ſpiritus erat ſcribentium quam loquentium, nec aliud ſunt ipſorum ſcripta, quam ipſorum cum abſentibus aut poſteris colloquia. Id quod planum facere facile eſſet. Nam patefactionis exemplum eſt in Paulo, qui ſe evangelium non ab ullo homine, ſed Jeſu Chriſto patefaciente didiciſſe dicit, *Galat.* i. Vaticinationis in Agabo in *Actis*; ſed ea quidem, quatenus mentis habet agitationem, ad inſtitutum noſtrum non pertinet, ſiquidem illa mentis agitatio, et, ut vocatur, vatum bacchatio, non literarum, ſed actionis et geſtus eſt, qui in ſcriptis cerni non poſſunt. Cognitionis exemplum eſt in Lucæ et Joannis hiſtoriis, qui narrant, hic quæ ipſe vidit et nonnulla ex parte geſſit, ille quæ ex viris fide dignis cognovit. Doctrinæ exemplum eſt in Pauli ad Galatas diſputatione de

legis

of diſcourſe in the ſacred writers. For they wrote concerning divine things, exactly in the ſame way as they were wont to talk about them with one another; and whether they wrote or ſpake, their mind and knowlege and divine inſpiration were the ſame; nor are their writings any thing elſe but their converſation with abſent chriſtian friends, or with poſterity.

This matter may be eaſily explained. For Paul gives us an example, what revelation *is, in himſelf, where he ſays, Gal. i.* 11, 12. "I certify you, brethren, that the goſpel 'which was preached by me, is not after 'man. For I neither received it of man, 'neither was I taught it, but by the revela-'tion of Jeſus Chriſt.'

What Agabus, Acts xxi. 10, 11. *ſaid of Paul's bonds and impriſonment, is an inſtance of* prophecy.

The hiſtories of John, and Luke, are ſpecimens of what the apoſtle calls knowlege; *the former relates what he ſaw, and wherein he was in part an actor himſelf; Luke, what he learned from credible witneſſes.*

What the apoſtle would have us to underſtand by doctrine, *is exemplified in the diſqui-*

legis operibus et fidei juſtificatione, in qua ſacrarum literarum auctoritate rationibuſque nititur. Quæ cum ita ſint, nobis ita verſandum eſt in ſacris auctoribus, ut hæc tria, videlicet patefactionem, cognitionem et doctrinam non confundamus; ſed quæ patefactione tradita ſunt, ea pro oraculis: quæ cognitione, pro teſtimoniis: quæ doctrina, pro hominum ſententiis habeamus. Ita fiet ut tantum cuique rei, quantum ipſius natura poſtulat, tribuentes, eas perturbationes evitemus, quæ ex hujuſce diſtinctionis ignoratione naſcentes, non niſi eadem cognita et admiſſa tolli poſſunt.

Igitur ſi quæ occurrunt in ſacris literis vel diſcrepantiæ vel repugnantiæ, diligenter conſiderandum erit, utrum eæ ſunt in oraculis, an in teſtimoniis, an in hominum ſententiis: nam ſi erunt in oraculis, oportebit

sitions concerning the works of the *law, and* justification by faith, *in his epistle to the Galatians; where he makes use of reasoning and arguments drawn from the authority of the hebrew scriptures.*

Now since this is the true state of facts, we must be careful in reading the sacred writers, that we do not create confusion and mistake by blending these three things together, revelation, knowlege, and doctrine, and by arguing upon them as the same; but keeping them distinct, to look upon what comes by revelation, as the oracles of God; what knowlege of facts we have, to consider as received by credible testimony; and what is delivered as doctrine, to esteem only as the opinions of men. By this separate consideration and distinguishing of each subject, we shall steer clear from that confusion and error, which will otherwise be unavoidable.

If therefore we meet with any disagreement or contradiction in the sacred writings, we must carefully observe, whether it be in the oracles, i. e. *the word of God, or in the testimonies to it, or the opinions of men about it. For if it be in the word of God itself, we*

tebit circumſtantias omnes et locorum, et temporum, et perſonarum, et occaſionum atque cauſarum ſedulo perpendere, ut in ea, quæ videbatur, diſcordia, concordiam inveniamus: quod ſi ne ſic quidem invenerimus, tribuendum id erit ignorantiæ noſtræ, et credendum aliquid ibi eſſe nobis ignotum, quod ſi perciperemus ſummam ibi concordiam eſſe videremus: nam ſpiritus veritatis, qui oraculorum iſtorum author eſt, non pugnat ipſe ſecum; nec in eum vel oblivio, vel error, vel ignorantia ulla cadit. Sin erunt in teſtimoniis, non oportebit nos nimis eſſe ſuperſtitioſos neque ſingula verba curioſius obſervare atque inter ſeſe componere, ſed ea concordia, quæ eſt in ſumma rei, contentos eſſe; nam ſi duorum aut trium teſtimonio credi leges tum profanæ tum ſacræ recte jubent, cum tamen ejuſmodi teſtimonia raro (præſertim ſi de re ſunt paulo vel prolixiore vel implicatiore) in ſingulis verbis concordent, etiamſi teſtes ſunt alioqui viri probi et veraces: debemus in ſacrorum authorum teſtimoniis illam legem vel prudentiam vel æquitatem ſine moroſi-

tate

must diligently weigh and consider all the circumstances of place, time, persons, occasions, reasons for delivering it, till we find a real harmony, where we thought the disagreement lay. But if we cannot by these means discover it, we must believe that there is some point of which we are ignorant, which if we could see, all would be in perfect agreement. For the spirit of truth, God himself, who is the author of this word, cannot contradict himself, nor can forgetfulness, or error, or ignorance belong to him.

But if the disagreement be in the testimonies to the facts of the New Testament, we are not to be too superstitious, nor over minute and scrupulous in marking and comparing each word, but to content ourselves with a general agreement upon the main points. For if laws both human and divine, direct us, very properly, to give credit to two or three witnesses, although such witnesses, otherwise very upright and honest men, seldom agree in every word, especially if it be in a matter of any length or obscurity; we ought surely to observe the same rule, and be governed by the like prudence and equity, without any troublesome nicety

tate imitari, alioquin noſtra moroſitate nihil aliud conſequemur, quam quod aut nulli auctores, ſive ſacri, ſive profani, nobis ſatisfacient, aut eas minutias conciliare conantes quæ conciliari nequeunt, ineptos nos ne dicam ridiculos præbeamus. Ac quod dixi de teſtimoniis, idem dico de hominum ſententiis, videlicet tantum eis tribuendum eſſe, quantum ſanctorum hominum dictis tribui debet, vel quantum ipſimet ſibi tribuunt; non tamen ut eodem cum oraculis loco habeamus, cum ne ipſi quidem hoc a nobis poſtulent.

CAP. XV.

NON dubito quin hoc loco nonnulli offendantur. Clamabunt eſſe blaſphemiam: ſacras enim literas eſſe divino afflatu conſcriptas, neque hominum, ſed dei arbitrio editas: quarum, ſi vel unum verbum in dubium vocetur, periculum

or exactneſs, in weighing and reconciling the teſtimonies of the ſacred writers. For we ſhall gain nothing elſe by our ſcrupuloſity, but ſuch a degree of ſcepticiſm, that no teſtimony of authors, profane or ſacred, will ſatisfy us; or ſhall make ourſelves perfectly ridiculous, by endeavouring to reconcile trifling differences, which never can nor need to be adjuſted.

And this that I have remarked concerning teſtimony, is to be extended to opinions of their own, delivered by the ſacred writers. We are to pay as much deference to them as is due to holy and good men, or as much as they themſelves require of us: but not to erect them into oracles, or place their word upon a level with the word of God, when they themſelves are far from demanding any ſuch thing from us.

CHAP. XV.

I HAVE no doubt but ſome will here be offended, and cry out, that I ſpeak blaſphemy; alleging that the ſcriptures were written by divine inſpiration; and publiſhed, not by the will of men, but of God; and that if but one

periculum ſit ne cadat earum auctoritas. A quibus ego poſtulo, ne ante de dictis meis judicent, quam ea rite et diligenter perpenderint. Ego ſacris literis non minus tribuo, quam quiſquam alius, et ſecundum earum doctrinam et vivo hactenus, et, ut ſpero ad finem uſque vivam; ac deum precor, ut potius me ex hac vita tollat, quam ut a tam ſancta et divina doctrina vivum deflectere patiatur; ſed quorundam ſuperſtitioni, hominum alioquin, ut ego exiſtimo, non improborum, obviam eundum puto, qui dum ſic ſingula verba, ubi nihil neceſſe eſt mordicus urgent, perturbant imprudenter eccleſiam opinionum diſſenſionibus, quæ qua alia via componi poſſint, nondum videre quivi; et tentatæ ſunt, idque jam diu, et a multis, multæ viæ: ego vero ſententiam meam, et rationibus, et ipſarum, de quibus agimus, ſacrarum literarum auctoritate, planam, ut ſpero, faciam. Deinde ſi quid in ea eſt incommodi, conferam, cum diſſentientis ſententiæ incommodis, quæ ſi majora eſſe evicero,

word in them be called in queſtion, there will be a danger of the authority of the whole coming to nothing.

All I aſk of theſe perſons, is, not to decide upon what I ſay, before they have rightly and attentively conſidered it. I have as much reverence for, and attribute as much to the ſcriptures, as any one; and have lived all my life, and hope to live to the end of it, in conformity to what they teach me; and I pray God ſooner to take me out of the world, than ſuffer me to turn aſide from ſo holy and divine an inſtitution. But I hold it right to oppoſe the ſuperſtition of ſome well-meaning perſons, as I eſteem them, who, by obſtinately dwelling on every word, imprudently diſturb the chriſtian church with continual diſſentions, which I know not any other way than this, of compoſing, though many have long been tried, and by different perſons. I have however a good hope of recommending my own method, by the reaſons with which I ſhall ſupport it, and the authority of the ſcriptures, which are the point in queſtion. After this, I ſhall contraſt the inconveniencies, if any there be, which may attend it, with thoſe of the oppoſite ſentiment;

evicero, poſtulabo ut ea ſententia, quæ et vera eſt, et minus habet incommodi, non repudietur; quod ſi impetravero, viam ut ſpero habebimus ad dirimendas graves et pernicioſas controverſias.

Ac primum quod ad rationem attinet, illud mihi negabit nemo, ſolere legatos, quæ a principe mandata acceperunt, ea ut principis mandata exponere, quæ in dubium vocare non liceat: quæ vero ipſi ſua ſponte dicunt, ea ipſos (ſi boni fidique ſunt legati) non principi ſed ſibi adſcribere, nec eandem his quam illis auctoritatem poſcere; deinde illud conſtare debet, Chriſtum ea hominibus conferre ſolitum bona, non quæ jam a natura haberent ipſi, ſed quibus carerent; quod ſi quod jam habebant a natura bonum, etiamſi id eſſet non undequaque perfectum, tamen quia ejus uſus eis commode conſtabat, id ipſe nec novum conferebat, nec melius aut perfectius reddebat: itaque ſi quando claudum ſanabat, tantum claudi-

tatem

timent; and if these last shall be proved to be much more weighty and considerable, all I desire is, that the opinion, which is true, and accompanied with the fewest difficulties, may not be rejected: and if I can carry this point, I trust we shall discover a way to put an end to many considerable and pernicious disputes.

And first with respect to the reasons, upon which it is founded, this point will be readily granted me, that ambassadors, who have received any commands from their prince, always lay them down in such a manner, that no one can dispute about them: but, if they be true and trusty men, what they deliver of their own accord, they will be cautious to ascribe to themselves and not to the prince, and not to require the same submission to be paid to it.

In the next place, we may be assured, that Christ did not bestow those benefits and qualities upon men which they naturally possessed, but which they were in want of. Therefore if they had any natural talent, though it might not be altogether perfect, yet because it might serve them very well, he did not give them a a new one, or alter that which they had for the better. If, for example, he healed a lame man,

tatem ſanabat; linguam quidem aut aures aut oculos aut os claudi nec ſanabat, quippe ſani; nec corrigebat aut perfectiora reddebat, quippe quibus jam alioquin uti poterant, quod idem et de cæteris dictum volo. Quod ſi in corpore id faciebat, idem in animo quoque eum facere, ut mihi concedatur, poſtulo, cum ſit in animo eadem et cauſa et ratio quæ in corpore. Ipſemet pronunciavit, ſanos non egere medico ſed ægrotos; id quod de animorum morbis dixit, in quibus idem, quod in corporum morbis factitabat. Quare ſic ſtatuamus, Chriſtum ea homini conferre, quibus homo caret: quæ vero alioquin habet homo, non item. Igitur ut hæc duo, quæ videlicet tum de legatis, tum de morborum ſanationibus dixi, ad inſtitutum noſtrum accomodentur, hæc dico: Erant apoſtoli, (ut ab his potiſſimum exemplum ducamus,) Chriſti legati, a quo quæ mandata acceperant, ea ut Chriſti mandata atque oracula bene et fideliter, (quippe ſancti juſtique viri) vel iis qui ipſos præſentes

man, he only cured his lameneſs; his tongue, ears, eyes, and mouth, he left as they were, as being already in a ſound ſtate; nor did he make any change or improvement in them, as they very ſufficiently anſwered their purpoſe. The ſame remark I would make in every other inſtance. I require alſo that it may be conceded to me, that he proceeded in the ſame way, in healing mens' minds, as their bodies, ſince the caſes are exactly parallel. He himſelf declared ( ) thoſe that are well need not a phyſician, but thoſe that are ſick. This he ſpoke of the diſeaſes of the mind, in which he uſed the like proceſs as in thoſe of the body. It is therefore a ſettled point, that Chriſt conferred on the man, what the man wanted; but what the man already otherwiſe poſſeſſed, he meddled not with.

To apply therefore to our purpoſe, what I have here noted concerning the office of ambaſſadors, and of the healing of diſeaſes. The apoſtles, (that I may particularly exemplify the ſubject in them) were the ambaſſadors of Chriſt. What commands they received from him, as they were holy and righteous men, they would deliver truly and faithfully, as his commands

and

præſentes audiebant, verbis, vel abſentibus, et porro nobis, ſcriptis expoſuerunt: ac de iis dubitare non licet. Sin aliquid non a Chriſto mandatum, ſed ipſi ſua ſponte dicebant, id non Chriſti, aut ſpiritui ſancti, ſed ſibi adſcribebant.

Jam cum Chriſtus eorum opera uſus fuerit, non dubium eſt quin eos inſtruxerit rebus ad id munus neceſſariis; ſed ſic inſtruxerit, ut ſi quid alioquin habebant, id non dederit. Exempli gratia, erat eis ad loquendum opus lingua: eam nemini eorum dedit, quippe jam haberent; erat opus auribus ad auditorum verba audienda: nec eas quidem dedit; erat et pedibus opus ad iter, neque eos dedit: denique nihil eis dedit, quod jam haberent. At peregrinarum linguarum ſcientiam, qua et opus erat ad docendos populos, et ipſi carebant, dedit; et miraculorum poteſtatem contulit, et eis ad percipienda oracula mentem aperuit; denique omnia illis ad munus iſtud neceſſaria, quibus alioquin carebant, contulit.

Jam

and divine oracles, either in words to thoſe that were their hearers, or in writing, to thoſe that were abſent; and ſo to us. Concerning theſe things we can have no doubt. But what they had not received from Chriſt, but ſpoke of their own motion, this they did not aſcribe to Chriſt, or to the holy ſpirit, but to themſelves.

As Chriſt moreover was to make uſe of their miniſtry, there can be no queſtion, but that he furniſhed them with every thing neceſſary for their office: but then, not ſo as to ſupply them with what they already otherwiſe enjoyed. For inſtance: it was neceſſary for them to have a tongue to ſpeak with: this he gave to none of them, becauſe they already had it. The like may be ſaid of ears, and feet, and ſo on. In a word, he gave them nothing of what they already had. But as the knowlege of foreign languages was neceſſary to teach other nations, and they were without it, he beſtowed it upon them: he gave them alſo a power of working miracles, and opened their minds to underſtand the word of God; in ſhort, conferred upon them every thing they ſtood in need of, to diſcharge and fulfil their office and truſt.

Again,

Jam cum et memoriæ et intellectus vim a natura haberent, ſi quæ erant vel memoriæ vel intellectus ope ſcribenda, Chriſtus eis ad illa ſcribenda memoriam aut intellectum non dabat, non magis profecto quam oculos aut manus aut chartam aut atramentum, quippe cum omnia illa jam haberent: ſed ipſi ſua memoria ſuoque ingenio illa ſcribebant. Quod ſi cujus eorum memoria vel ingenium erat infirmius, ei poterat in ſcribendo idem accidere, quod in loquendo, et quod cæteris bonis viris interdum accidit; videlicet ut ei dictum aliquod excideret infirmioris vel memoriæ vel judicii. Scripſiſſe autem eos non omnia patefaciente ſpiritu ſancto, ſed quædam ope memoriæ, alia ingenii, patet ex eorum ſcriptis. Nam quod ad memoriam attinet, didicerunt evangeliſtæ evangelium non patefactione, ut Paulus, ſed vel quia ipſi adfuerunt, ut Matthæus et Joannes, vel ex iis, qui adfuerant, cog-

Again. As they had from nature received the powers of memory, and underſtanding; in thoſe things that were to be written down by the help of memory and underſtanding, Chriſt did not give them a memory and underſtanding to write them, any more than he gave them eyes, and hands, and paper, and ink, becauſe they already had all theſe things: but they they compoſed their writings from their own memories and abilities. And if it was ſo, that any one of them had not a very ſtrong memory, or ſlower parts, the ſame might befall him in writing, as in ſpeaking, and what ſometimes happens to men in other reſpects moſt worthy; namely, *to make a ſlight ſlip, or forget ſomething, through defect of memory or judgment. And that they did not indite every thing by inſpiration; but ſome things by memory, and from their own underſtandings, is apparent from their writings.*

With reſpect to their making uſe of their own memories, it is obſervable, that all the four evangeliſts learned the goſpel, not from revelation, as did Paul; but either from what they ſaw and heard themſelves, as was true of Matthew, and John; or they had their in-

cognoverunt, ut Marcus et Lucas; id quod ipſimet teſtantur, ſiquidem Joannes in evangelio teſtatur ſe viſa teſtari, cap. xix. et xxi. Et idem in 1 epiſtolæ ſuæ initio tradit ſe, quod et oculis viderit, et auribus audiverit, et manibus pulpaverit, id teſtari; ex quo apparet, eum dicere teſtimonium, ad quod dicendum nihil ei, ſicuti Paulo, opus erat patefactione. Lucas quoque teſtatur ſe ex aliis audita ſcribere, id quod profecto non dixiſſet, ſi evangelium, ſicuti Paulus, patefactione cognoviſſet; quod idem et de cæteris duobus, ſcilicet Matthæo et Marco, cenſendum eſt. Item quod ad ingenium attinet, ſcribit diſerte Paulus 1 Cor. viii. 'Conjugibus præcipio, non ego, ſed dominus,' &c. et mox: 'cæteris ego dico, non dominus;' et paulo poſt, 'de virginibus

formation from thoſe who were preſent to the tranſactions, which was the caſe of Mark and Luke. This we gather from themſelves. For John in his goſpel tells us, that he bore teſtimony to what he himſelf ſaw, xix. 35. xxi. 24. *In the beginning likewiſe of his firſt epiſtle he mentions, that he bore witneſs to what he had* heard, *and* ſeen *and* looked upon *and* handled. *Hence it appears, that he did not need any revelation, as Paul did, to bring him acquainted with the goſpel, and to enable him to make credible report of it to others. Luke alſo,* i. 2, 3, *tells us, that he wrote from the information of thoſe, who were eye-witneſſes; which he would not have ſaid, if he had received the knowlege of the goſpel, as Paul, by revelation: and the ſame judgment we are to form of Matthew, and Mark, though they themſelves ſay nothing on the ſubject.*

Alſo with regard to the ſacred writers recording ſome things merely from the fund of their own underſtandings and good ſenſe, Paul ſays expreſsly, 1 *Cor.* vii. 10. 12. 25. Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, &c. But to the reſt ſpeak I, not the Lord. Now concerning virgins, I have

bus autem domini præceptum non habeo, ſed conſilium do, ut qui is ſim, cui domini clementia fidentem eſſe datum eſt.' Hic certo palam oſtendit, non omnia ſe ex domini præcepto ſcribere, ſed in nonnullis ſuam ſententiam dicere.

CAP. XVI.

Nunc dicenda ſunt quæ contra adduci poſſunt incommoda. Dicet enim aliquis, periculum eſſe ne hac ratione detrahatur auctoritas ſacris literis, neve eis minus fides habeatur. Ad quod ego reſpondeo: etiamſi ita eſſet, non idcirco non eſſe vera, quæ dixi; aut ſi quis falſa putet, refellat: quod ſi vera ſunt, ut certe ſunt, eis locus dari debet, præſertim propter ea quæ loco ſuo dicentur. Nunc non ita eſt, meo quidem judicio; non enim ſita eſt ſacrorum ſcriptorum auctoritas

in

no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be found faithful. *Here he in the most open manner shews, that he did not write every thing according to the commandment of the Lord, but in some things delivered only his own opinion.*

CHAP. XVI.

I am now to speak of the disadvantages, which result from this method of interpreting the scriptures of the New Testament. For some will say, that there is a danger hence to be apprehended, that the authority of the sacred writings will be diminished, and less credit be paid to them. To this I reply, that if it were so, what I have advanced would not be the less true; or if any one thinks it to be otherwise, let him confute it. But if it be true, as it certainly is, it ought to be received, especially on account of what I shall mention in its proper place.

But indeed, in my opinion, no such consequences would follow. For the authority of the sacred writings depends not on a nice ad-

in paucis quibuſdam locis ſcrupuloſius ad calculos revocandis, ſed in ipſius doctrinæ tenore atque corpore, quemadmodum ſupra demonſtravimus. Itaque quemadmodum legati authoritas ſarta tecta manet, etiamſi dicas, eum interdum quædam dicere non juſſu principis; ita et ſacrorum ſcriptorum authoritas nihil diminuitur, ſi de eis idem dicas, quod de ſe ipſo dicere Paulum paulo ante demonſtravimus. Et vero cur illis plus tribuamus, quam ipſimet ſibi, nullam cauſam video; quin id ſine vitio fieri non poſſe puto. Ipſe Paulus quantum ſibi et cæteris tribuendum ſit, non obſcure docet, dum ad Corinthios ita loquitur 1 Cor. iv. 'Sic de nobis exiſtiment homines ut de Chriſti miniſtris et divinorum arcanorum diſpenſatoribus." Hoc qui tribuit illis, ſatis tribuit, etiamſi illorum ſingula verba non ad vivum reſecet.

Equidem quid aliis accidat neſcio; ego hac ſententia tanto magis in eorum authoritate acquieſco atque confirmor, dum eos video ita rei et hominum ſaluti fuiſſe intentos,

ut

juſtment of a few particular paſſages, but on the tenor and ſubſtance of the whole doctrine, as I have demonſtrated above. Therefore as the authority of an ambaſſador remains unblemiſhed, though he may ſometimes ſay things, for which he has not his prince's order: ſo would not the authority of ſcripture ſuffer, if you ſay of it, what I have juſt now ſhewn the apoſtle to ſpeak concerning himſelf. And why we ſhould attribute more to the ſcriptures, than Paul attributes to himſelf, I ſee no reaſon, but much in it to blame. Paul himſelf ſhews pretty plainly, in what eſtimation he would wiſh himſelf, and his fellow-apoſtles to be held, 1 *Cor. iv.* 1. *where he ſays,* Let a man ſo account of us, as of the miniſters of Chriſt, and ſtewards of the myſteries of God. *He that conſiders them in this light, does enough, though he does not diſſect every word to a nicety, and find out its meaning.*

How others may feel upon the ſubject, I know not. For my own part, I declare, that I am hereby more confirmed, and more gladly acquieſce, in the authority of the ſacred writers, when I ſee them ſo intent upon their meſſage and the ſalvation of men, as not to be very

ut verborum non uſque adeo magnam habuerint rationem: quæ res illorum teſtimonia tanto oſtendit eſſe veriora; qui enim ſibi ſunt veritatis conſcii, ii de verbis minus laborant: qui vero mentiuntur, illi ſummam adhibere ſolent diligentiam, ut orationis artificio et conſenſu mendacium occultent.

Sed dicet rurſus aliquis: at Petrus docet non hominis voluntate editum unquam fuiſſe oraculum, ſed ſpiritus ſancti impulſu locutos fuiſſe vates, 2 Pet. i. Item Paulus, 2 Tim. iii. 'Omne ſcriptum eſſe divinitus 'inſpiratum.' Ad quod ego reſpondeo de oraculis illa dici, ſicut ipſimet teſtantur: ſed non ideo tolli illam, quam ſupra ex ipſomet Paulo citavi, diſtinctionem oraculorum

ſolicitous about the language, in which they expreſs and convey it. And aſſuredly this ſtill gives greater credibility to their teſtimony. For they who are conſcious that they deliver nothing but the truth, are not anxious about the words they uſe. But they who deal in falſehood, ſtretch every nerve to cover their deceit, by the elaborate compoſition of their own narrative, and its moſt exact agreement in every part.

But it will farther perhaps be objected: Does not the apoſtle Peter ſay, that prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the holy ſpirit. 2 *Pet. i.* 21? *And Paul,* 2 *Tim. iii.* 16. All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God. *To which I anſwer; that it does not therefore follow, that every thing in the ſcriptures is inſpired: for this is ſpoken by the apoſtle, concerning the divine oracles, i. e. ſuch things as came by revelation: but this does not invalidate or take away the difference and diſtinction that is to be obſerved in the ſubjects recorded in the New Teſtament, which I have cited above from St. Paul; ſome of which are undoubtedly inſpired or received by revelation, but others are only teſtimonies*

rum et teſtimoniorum, et humanarum ſententiarum. * * * * * * * * *

Ita enim comparatum eſt ut, quæ hactenus hominibus incognita fuerunt, ea principio ægre admittantur, quamvis ſint veriſſima; nam adſueti homines veteri vino, quemadmodum docet Chriſtus, novum non protinus probant, magiſque vetere delectantur. Sed audendum aliquid eſt, modo verum, ſi juvare homines volumus; alioquin ſi eandem cum iis, qui nihil hominibus profuerunt, rationem perpetuo ſequemur, hominibus non magis quam illi proderimus; fit enim hic quod in morbis, ut ſi majorum remedia fruſtra fuerunt, alia tentanda ſint, aut de ſanatione deſperandum: fecit hoc noſtro tempore medicorum induſtria, qui, cum majores morbum neapolitanum ſanare nequiviſſent, nova remedia, idque alia ſuper alia excogitârunt, donec tandem ejus ſanandi rationem invenerunt. Vidit hoc Iſocrates quoque, qui in Evagora eos reprehendens, qui conſueta mala inſuetis bonis anteponunt, dicit

monies to the facts of the goſpel, or human reaſonings about them. * * * * * * * *

So it is, that men with difficulty admit at firſt, what they have been ignorant of, however moſt true it be. For as Chriſt ſays, thoſe that are uſed to old wine, do not immediately take to the new, though it be better. But we muſt not be diſcouraged in our attempts, when perſuaded of the truth of what we have to offer, if we would in earneſt ſerve mankind. Otherwiſe, if we go on in the ſame track with thoſe who have never benefited the world, we ſhall like them be wholly uſeleſs. For the caſe is the ſame here, as in the diſeaſes of men's bodies. If the remedies found out by our anceſtors, are inefficacious, we muſt try others, or deſpair of doing any good. This has actually been accompliſhed by the labours of phyſicians, in our own days; who, when thoſe that had gone before them, could not heal the neapolitan diſeaſe, invented new remedies, one after another, till at length they diſcovered a method of cure. Iſocrates alſo ſaw this, who in his Evagoras, blaming thoſe, who preferred ills to which they had been accuſtomed, to untried good, delivers this ſentiment: Thus we ſee,

that

dicit hanc ſententiam; *Videmus tum artium, tum cæterorum omnium incrementa fieri non per eos, qui uſitatis contenti ſunt, ſed per eos, qui, ſi quid perperam comparatum eſt, corrigere ac mutare audent.*

that improvements in arts, as well as in every thing elſe, are not made by thoſe, who are content with what they have been accuſtomed to; but by thoſe, who have the courage to attempt to correct and amend whatever they ſee amiſs and wrong.

For brevity ſake, I have omitted above, what the author had remarked concerning the great diſadvantages which flow from the contrary opinion and method of conſidering the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament as alike inſpired throughout, and from overlooking his diſtinction of the different nature and importance of the ſubjects treated of in the ſcriptures, which he ſupports with ſuch ſolid reaſon.

The concluſion of the whole you will eſteem a noble plea for free inquiry into the ſcriptures, and an honourable juſtification of Dr. Prieſtley, in regard to many reflections, which Dr. Horne in your names caſts upon him.

A very

A very learned friend, who has lately been reading the third edition of Michaelis's *Enleĉtung*, or introductory lectures to the New Teſtament, printed at Gottingen in 1777, and much altered, improved, and enlarged from the firſt edition, informs me, that this german writer therein expreſſes his doubts of the authenticity of the *Revelation of St. John*; but what is very remarkable, and which is indeed my only reaſon for mentioning this circumſtance, is; that Michaelis informs his readers, that Luther had alſo his doubts concerning it; and proves it by quotations from two prefaces, annexed to early editions of Luther's german bible; which have been ſince ſuppreſſed. So that others have been as free in their criticiſms on ſcripture, as Dr. Prieſtley.

To ſay nothing of Mr. *Whiſton*'s frequent declarations againſt retaining the ſong of Solomon, as a part of our ſacred writings, Dr. *Durell*, late Principal of Hertford college, whom I have cited above, thus freely expreſſes himſelf about it.

'This

'This poem is generally conſidered as an 'epithalamium compoſed by Solomon on his 'marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh, 'the king of Egypt. And this appears to 'me the only point of view in which it 'ought to be conſidered. In reſpect to the 'myſtical ſenſe which it is ſuppoſed to 'contain, I muſt frankly acknowlege, that 'I cannot perceive the leaſt foundation for 'it. This notion, I ſuppoſe, was originally 'derived from the *Targum*, and adopted ſoon 'after by ſome of the fathers, who, with 'more piety than judgment, thought that, 'as St. Paul compares the union of Chriſt 'to his church to a marriage, this poem 'ought alſo to be interpreted with reference 'to the ſame ſubject. But how is it con-'ſiſtent with this idea, that neither the name 'of God, nor of Chriſt, ever occurs in it? 'that there is not one religious or moral 'ſentiment to be found? that it is not once 'either quoted, or moſt diſtantly alluded to, 'in any part of the ſacred writings? on 'which account perhaps it is not directed 'to be read in our churches. We find alſo, 'that thoſe who attempt to trace the alle-

'gory

'gory in every part are ſoon loſt in an inex-
'tricable labyrinth.'

'*But I ſeem already to hear it objected, that*
'*it is a great preſumption to venture to diſſent*
'*from an opinion, which has been eſtabliſhed*
'*for near twenty centuries, and has been*
'*abetted by great, good, and learned men dur-*
'*ing all that long interval*; *and that this novel*
'*opinion may tend to weaken the foundation*
'*of the church of Chriſt. To this I reply, that*
'*mere length of time is but a ſandy foundation*
'*for the baſis of truth to reſt upon*; *that all*
'*that it can in reaſon pretend to is, to teach us*
'*caution before we quit eſtabliſhed opinions*:
'*but ſurely it ought not to preclude us from*
'*making due inquiries and uſing our rational*
'*powers*; *or upon due conviction of former*
'*errors, from publicly detecting them.* In re-
'gard to any ſuppoſed inconvenience accru-
'ing to the chriſtian religion, I really ſee
'none. On the contrary, as it is ſo well
'eſtabliſhed on *the ſure word of prophecy*,
'which *thrones, principalities, and powers,*
'cannot prevail againſt, it appears to me
'more for the intereſt of that religion to
'quit an untenable poſt, than to expoſe it

'to

'to the assault of enemies, who must inevi-
'tably soon become masters of it.' *Durell's* critical remarks, &c. p. 298. 299.

It belongs to our subject, and may be of service to you to mention, that this learned man, has in the same work, p. 22. &c. pointed out the true reading of that passage, Job xix. 25, &c. so much misrepresented in our english translation, where it is put, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God,*" &c. He afterwards gives the following paraphrase of the passage, as he has restored it. 'I know 'that I have yet a deliverer *(e)* left, who will 'hereafter

(e) For translating the original, which is a general word, *deliverer*, and not *redeemer*, Dr. Durell in the beginning of his comment on this text, renders this reason. 'As I think 'it will appear that there is no allusion to Christ, or to the 'resurrection of the body, in this passage, it seems better 'to substitute a word instead of *redeemer*, which may not 'mislead our ideas.'

I reckon this a valuable criticism, and worthy of being extended to a variety of cases. Ambiguous words in the vernacular translations of the bible, and in public sermons and discourses, should be avoided, where it can be done.

The

'hereafter eſpouſe my cauſe, even on this 'ſide the grave; and that after theſe men 'ſhall have exerciſed their cruelty upon me, 'which I compare to flaying me alive, I 'ſhall at length ſee God; whom I ſhall ſee, 'and my eyes ſhall behold, declaring him-'ſelf in my favour, and no longer alienated 'from me, as he ſeems at preſent.' The worthy author then adds;

'As for the interpretation which converts 'the paſſage into a prophecy of the reſur-'rection of the body, beſides that it implies 'a degree of light ill correſponding with the 'times, in which either Job is ſuppoſed to 'have lived, or this book to have been 'written; it requires ſuch interpolation of 'new words, and forced conſtruction of 'thoſe

The term, *the redeemer*, for inſtance, which cuſtom in our engliſh language has appropriated to Chriſt, (as alſo the word *Saviour*) ſhould cautiouſly be uſed where the Almighty Being and not Chriſt is intended, leſt the undiſcerning hearer or reader miſtake you, and carry away the notion that you ſpoke of Chriſt. So long as the bulk of chriſtians, though in words they deny it, do in fact worſhip more gods than one, all ſuch doubtful phraſes ſhould be diſcarded by thoſe who are the worſhipers of one God only, and are deſirous to promote that worſhip.

'thoſe found in the text, that I am fully 'perſuaded, with the allowance of ſuch 'liberties, an ingenious conjecturer may 'make almoſt any text of ſcripture depoſe 'in favour of this or of any other doctrine. 'The beſt commentators have therefore juſtly 'exploded it. Nor let it be imagined that 'we are undermining the foundations of 'our faith, by withdrawing a ſupport that 'does not belong to it. It remains firmly 'fixed on the baſis of truth, which cannot 'be moved, and wants no aſſiſtance from 'falſhood or error. But neither are we in 'any wiſe allowed to *handle the word of God* '*deceitfully*, from an apprehenſion of the ill 'uſe, which unſtable or wicked men may 'make of a right interpretation of it, at the 'hazard of their own ſalvation.'

A fitter, or more juſt vindication could not have been made, of the freedom of Dr. Prieſtley's diſcuſſion of the ſacred writings, than in the apology, which this learned author offers for himſelf, and for the liberties he hath taken with the text, and canon of ſcripture, in theſe two quotations which I have cited from him. The doubting con-

cerning the genuineneſs of any particular part of ſcripture, or even on good grounds rejecting it, is ſo far from tending to invalidate, that it confirms the authority of thoſe other parts, whoſe evidence is not, nor can juſtly be called in queſtion. You have therefore no reaſon to be apprehenſive that the goſpel will ſuffer from the freeſt inveſtigations. And if I miſtake not, you will by no means be pleaſed with the alarms which Dr. Horne would raiſe againſt Dr. Prieſtley on this account, and to which he makes you parties, p. 11. 12. of his undergraduate's letter. Stript of the little decorations from my friend's laboratory, which muſt be allowed to the good preſident of Magdalen, as there is nothing elſe to recommend it, the plain amount of what he ſays, is; that Dr. Prieſtley firſt labours to twiſt the ſcripture to a ſenſe it will not bear; or, if that cannot be done, to find out ſome old MS. reading to favour his hereſy: if this fails, he makes no ſcruple of altering the text in an arbitrary manner; and when nothing elſe will do, he concludes, that the ſacred writer

writer was a fool, and knew nothing at all about the matter.

Such general accuſations, thrown out in the air without proof, are fit only for the mob of readers, who never think; and can affect theſe only. Whether Dr. Prieſtley interprets ſcripture rightly, or not; or diſcards any part of it without cauſe, can only be determined by its proper evidence.

SECTION VIII.

CONCERNING THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

The eternal God a feeble ſuffering man! How the minds of many are capable of being reconciled to ſuch a ſtrange aſſertion. Throughout the hebrew ſcriptures, Chriſt uniformly ſpoken of as a man, and a great prophet, who was to be born of a particular tribe and family among them. The Jews expected him, and thoſe who received him, believed in him, in that character only. The three former evangeliſts, and Luke in his ſecond treatiſe, never ſeem to have had a thought of Chriſt being any other than a man like

themſelves, with extraordinary powers from God. The evangeliſt St. John and the reſt of the writers of the New Teſtament do not differ from the preceding. A ſingular teſtimony to the ſpreading of this true doctrine concerning Chriſt. The teſtimony to it of the late Dr. Le Courayer.

In one place Dr. Horne introduces you thus addreſſing Dr. Prieſtley, making himſelf one of your number, as uſual. 'With 'the ſcriptures open before us, we can 'no more believe that our Lord Jeſus 'was only a man, like ourſelves; we can 'no more adopt your interpretation of thoſe 'texts, which aſſert or imply him to be 'God, than we can believe the Alcoran, 'or adopt the ſtories which it contains." Undergraduate's letter, p. 25.

Dr. Horne may make this declaration for himſelf, though I flatter myſelf you will be perſuaded, that it does not beſpeak him to have much conſidered the ſubject. If I be not miſtaken, you would have anſwered for yourſelves with more modeſty and leſs prejudice;

judice; and perhaps in ſome ſuch manner as this;

'We will conſider, Dr. Prieſtley, what 'you offer, from ſcripture, to prove our 'Lord Jeſus Chriſt, not to be the eternal 'God, but a man like ourſelves. For we 'frankly own to you, that we have never 'examined this matter, as you wiſh us to 'do. Our education has hitherto led us to 'embrace the contrary, as a true doctrine, 'intirely upon the authority of others, with-'out any proper inquiry and conviction 'of our own. And to ſay the truth, we 'oftentimes know not what to make of 'God Almighty being a weak mortal like 'ourſelves.'

I have no doubt but I ſpeak the natural ſentiment of many of you here. And indeed this is a doctrine that would ſtartle with its impoſſibility, every underſtanding of man, that was not familiarized to it from the cradle, or that could ſuffer himſelf to entertain one free thought about it: and yet with Dr. Horne, and many others, it is the corner-ſtone of chriſtianity. So ſtrong

are their prejudices, and their minds ſo faſt cloſed up by the awful notion of Chriſt being the moſt high God, firſt inſtilled into them, that there is not the leaſt crevice left for one ray of light to penetrate afterwards. From the liberality of the times in which your happier lot is caſt, and at your open and pliant age, truth may expect a fairer hearing, and gain admittance.

The general outline of the evidence in the ſacred writings, concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who, and what manner of perſon he was, I ſhall lay before you, to be weighed in the even ſcales of your own judgments: deſiring you however to excuſe the poſitive, peremptory manner, in which I may ſpeak of his being intirely one of the human race, moſt highly favoured of God, which I cannot avoid if I ſpeak at all; ſo plain appears to me the evidence for it, throughout the bible. You will determine for yourſelves, whether there be ſufficient grounds for my perſuaſion.

In your reſearches then firſt into the hebrew ſcriptures, you will find, that in all the mention made of the Meſſiah, and the predictions relating to him, he is always ſpoken of, expreſsly, as one of the human race, and not as of any different condition of being; and in nothing beyond other men, ſave that he was to be the moſt honoured, beloved *(f)* ſervant, prophet and meſſenger of the Divine Being, that had ever appeared.

If the prophet Iſaiah, ſpeaking long before of the goſpel-times, ſays, xxxv. 4, *they ſhall ſee the glory of the* LORD, *and the excellency of our God. Behold your God ſhall come and ſave you:* and the like, in other places: We ſay, God did come, at that time, in and by his ſervant Jeſus, *upon whom he put his ſpirit,* xlii. 1. xi. 2. And God truly came, in the ſcripture-phraſe, though it was only the prophet, or Chriſt, who

(f) Behold my ſervant, whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my ſoul delighteth: I have put my ſpirit upon him. Iſ. xlii. 1. *And the ſpirit of the* LORD *ſhall reſt upon him, the ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding,* &c. xi. 2.

who came in his name: in the ſame manner as God is ſaid to ſpeak, *(g)* though it was only a prophet or Chriſt, who ſpoke in his name.

If the prophet Micah v. 2. deſcribing Chriſt before hand, ſays of him, *whoſe goings forth have been from of old, from everlaſting*: ſuch eſteemed critics as Munſter and Calvin, who cannot be ſuſpected of partiality, will tell you, that what the prophet intended was, that *his goings forth were* decreed *from eternity*.

You would never of yourſelves ſuſpect, in reading the Old Teſtament, that Jeſus was the God who appeared to, and acted, and was worſhiped, by the patriarchs, and Iſraelites; but you will ſee, in the courſe of this work, how this ſtrange notion was brought in, and ſupported, by heathen converts to the goſpel, from whom it has come down to our times, and is ſtill maintained by not a few chriſtians.

Paſſing

(g) God, *who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son.* Heb. i. 1, 2.

Paſſing from the hebrew to the chriſtian ſcriptures, you find in the goſpel-hiſtory, that the jews never expected their Meſſiah to be any thing, but a man, like themſelves, of a particular tribe and family, marked out by their prophets. And when he appeared, he was accordingly acknowleged, as a deſcendant of David, their favourite king; and he himſelf took to the title.

His mother, his kindred, his apoſtles, never had the leaſt idea of his being the eternal God, *(b)* but a human creature, like themſelves, highly favoured by him. The ſacred hiſtorians give an account of his birth, from Mary his mother, as being like that of other men, however different the manner

(b) Some have imagined, that the ancient Jews were acquainted with the doctrine of a trinity, and expected their Meſſiah to be Almighty God himſelf. See a full confutation of all that the Archdeacon of St. Albans, Dr. Horſeley, hath advanced upon this point, in the eleventh of Dr. Prieſtley's letters to him, intitled, *Of the time when Chriſt began to be conſidered as God, and the opinion of the antient and modern Jews with reſpect to the Meſſiah.*

ner of her conception of him; at firſt a helpleſs babe; growing up, acquiring the faculties and powers of a rational creature, by degrees; ſtanding in need of meat and drink, ſupported in life, as all of us are; ſubject to hunger, thirſt, pain, and at laſt dying as other men, in like circumſtances.

In peruſing the memoirs of the three firſt hiſtorians concerning Chriſt, you will ſee no reaſon to conclude, that they looked upon him as any thing more than a human creature, of their own country and nation, raiſed up for extraordinary purpoſes by Almighty God (*i*).

You may add, that this is confirmed by the teſtimony of antiquity. For the chriſtian

(*i*) See a proof of this, not only with reſpect to theſe three evangeliſts, but the whole of the ſcriptures alſo of the New Teſtament, in commentaries and eſſays, publiſhed by the Society for promoting the knowlege of the ſcriptures, vol. 1. p. 391, under the title of 'An Inquiry into 'the evidence which points out Chriſt to have been only 'a creature of the human race, inveſted with extraordi-'nary powers from God; as it ariſes from his own decla-'rations, and thoſe of his apoſtles and evangeliſts.'

tian fathers in general agree in the opinion, that Matthew, Mark, and Luke, treat only of Chriſt's humanity. But then they argue as if theſe evangeliſts knew of his being alſo a divine perſon, though they did not ſay any thing of it; and that they deſignedly ſpoke of him only as a human being, and that John, who came after them, ſupplied the deficiency, by treating of his divinity.

This however is all an after-thought of theſe men, to account for notions of Chriſt, which they had taken up, not from the ſcriptures, but from philoſophy, and heatheniſh conceits of the deity, which they had imported into chriſtianity. For there is no cauſe to think that the three former evangeliſts wrote with each others privity: much leſs that they had any idea of John writing after them, in the manner that is ſuppoſed, and that he was to take one department in ſpeaking of Chriſt, they another. Unqueſtionably they teach and tell every thing, which they thought to be of importance for the world to know, reſpecting their divine maſter, as if no one

was

was to have come after them, or ſay any more about him.

I have no doubt but this argument alone will appear to you deciſive, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was only a human creature, with an extraordinary commiſſion and powers from Almighty God; eſpecially when you take into conſideration with it, that there is no ground for the ſuppoſition of the early chriſtian fathers, who have been followed in it ever ſince, that John ſet himſelf particularly to treat of Chriſt's divinity, upon ſeeing it to have been omitted by the other evangeliſts; after whom he is generally acknowleged to have written, and to have peruſed their narratives.

But it will be found by you on examination, and from what will be in this work propoſed to you, that John does not differ from the three former evangeliſts, or ſpeak of Chriſt as any other than a human being; nay, that he *expreſsly declares* that it was not his deſign to treat of any divinity, or any thing more than human, belonging to his maſter Jeſus, except what related to his divine

vine miſſion, and powers, beſtowed upon him.

The teſtimony of St. Luke in his goſpel. concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt being intirely one of the human race, and nothing more, receives a moſt ſingular confirmation from his ſecond treatiſe, called *The Acts*. This claims your attention the more, as it recites how, and in what manner, our Lord was ſpoken of, and preached, by his choſen followers after his death and being taken up into heaven. And you will have a particular opportunity of forming your own judgments of the fact, from the examination which will hereafter be given of the laſt Bampton lecturer's aſſertions to the contrary.

St. Luke in particular introduces Paul, in his famous ſpeech, in one of the courts of juſtice, at Athens, declaring to them, that Jeſus Chriſt was a man, (ανηρ,) commiſſioned and appointed to a high and important office, under the *God that made the world*. (Acts xvii. 24. 31.) And you will be ſatisfied, that he could not, and will find, that he does not, ſay any thing in contradiction

tradiction to this declaration, in his epiſtles. You will particularly perceive, that the *creation of all things* by Jeſus Chriſt, which he therein ſometimes ſpeaks of, is no other than a moral and ſpiritual creation, a reformation of mankind; and this effected, not by any *immediate* perſonal agency of Chriſt after he left the world, but by the mighty and effectual motives of the goſpel, delivered by him to its firſt preachers, and the ſpirit and power of God accompanying them.

It will be evident to you, from the tract above mentioned, that the apoſtle John in his other writings, and Peter and James in their epiſtles, harmonize together with Paul and the four evangeliſts, in their ſentiment concerning their maſter, Jeſus Chriſt, that he was a man with an extraordinary divine commiſſion and power, and not a ſuperior being, or the eternal God. And as the apoſtles and all believers, mentioned in the New Teſtament, appear to have entertained no other idea of him; it was natural to expect, and Dr. Prieſtley has fully ſhewn, that chriſtians in general afterwards embraced

embraced and continued in this ſentiment for ſome centuries, though learned men ſoon fell into ſtrange heatheniſh fancies concerning Chriſt, and by degrees ſucceeded in changing the doctrine of the apoſtles intirely concerning him, as it is upheld in all the great churches of chriſtendom to this day.

This evidence, which I have thus put before you in a ſummary manner, concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt being not the eternal God, but one of our brethren of mankind, being the teſtimony of all the writers, and all the actors, introduced in the old and new Teſtament, who have ſpoken of him, or referred to him; and being, in ſound and appearance only, or by miſrepreſentation or miſconſtruction, *ſeemingly* contradicted by a few particular texts; is ſo vaſt and preponderant, that it muſt ſtrike every eye not wholly blinded by prejudice, that looks at it. And though it has to combat the long prepoſſeſſion of many ages, derived from the learned fathers as they are called, whoſe writings have been carefully preſerved, whilſt thoſe of their opponents have been ſuffered

to periſh ; ſupported by the authority that ſtrikes vulgar minds with awe, that of ancient councils, of great and ſplendid churches, Romiſh, Greek, Gallican, of England, Scotland, Ireland, of proteſtant ſynods, prieſts, miniſters of almoſt all denominations, articles, creeds, confeſſions of faith, ancient and modern, catechiſms, &c. Yet ſuch is the force of truth, when permitted to ſpread its penetrating beams, as at this day in this happy country of ours, that not a few are daily feeling its influence, and coming over from the worſhip of three or more divine perſons or Gods, to the acknowlegement and worſhip of one firſt cauſe and ſole benevolent author of all things, one ſovereign eternal Mind and Spirit, the ſingle perſon of HIM, whom the holy Jeſus, called (John xx. 17.) his father and our father, his God, and our God; and whom he conſtantly invoked in humble prayer, (xvii. 3.) as *the only true God.*

It was an unwilling teſtimony to the increaſe of the number of chriſtian unitarians, which was exhibited before the public a few

few months paſt, in a pamphlet intitled, 'Thoughts on the progreſs of Socinianiſm; 'with an inquiry into the cauſe and the 'cure. In a letter humbly addreſſed to 'learned, orthodox, and candid miniſters of 'all denominations,' &c.

In the preface, it is ſaid to have been drawn up for the moſt part by one perſon, but that ſeveral contributed to it, and all concerned, concurred in the publication. Whoever they were that had a hand in it, the good ſpirit and temper that prevails throughout towards thoſe chriſtians called ſocinians, but who differ very much from Socinus, does them great honour, and indeed is almoſt unexampled ſince the days of the excellent Tillotſon; who was unjuſtly accuſed of favouring their opinions, becauſe he ſpoke well of the men.

'That ſocinianiſm hath, for ſome years 'paſt, ſay theſe gentlemen, been making a 'rapid progreſs in this country, is a fact too 'evident to need a proof, and in our idea, a 'matter greatly to be lamented; as we can-'not but apprehend that this doctrine robs 'the goſpel of ſome of its peculiar glories,

'brings chriſtianity nearly to a level with 'the religion of nature, and thus tends to 'prepare the way for deiſm.'

'We are far from thinking that its abet-'tors ſee it in this light: ſome of them, we 'readily admit, are men of upright views, 'and excellent moral characters, who mean 'to ſerve the intereſts of chriſtianity. But 'this does not alter our views of the doc-'trine itſelf, nor leſſen our apprehenſion of 'its dangerous tendency. We have not to do 'with men, but things.

'It has been ſaid, *that the great deſign of 'chriſtianity is to engage men to live ſober, 'righteous, and godly lives; and that this end 'is as well ſecured by the ſocinian view of it as 'any other.* The former of theſe propoſi-'tions we readily allow. The latter we muſt 'diſpute. The doctrine of the atonement 'by the death of Chriſt, appears to us to be 'founded upon ſuch views of the divine 'perfections, and to ſuggeſt ſuch motives to 'univerſal holineſs, as well as to yield ſuch 'conſolation to the penitent guilty, that the 'denial of it greatly weakens the efficacy of 'the goſpel as a practical ſyſtem, though it

'does

'does not utterly deſtroy it. And we ſee 'this doctrine ſo clearly revealed in the ſa- 'cred ſcriptures, that it is matter of aſtoniſh- 'ment to us that any, who receive them as 'the rule of their faith, can oppoſe, or for 'a moment doubt concerning it. Nor can 'we help thinking, that to reconcile the 'ſcriptures to the opinions of the ſocinians, 'neceſſarily requires them, to be tortured in 'ſuch a degree, as muſt tend to give to the 'generality of readers ſuch an idea of their 'obſcurity, as is likely to promote ſcepticiſm 'with reſpect to their divine original.

'On theſe accounts *we cannot but expreſs* 'a painful concern, *while we obſerve the pro-* 'greſs of the ſocinian tenets, *and apprehend the* 'increaſing ſpread of them; unleſs ſome vigor- 'ous methods be adopted to prevent it; and 'we feel an ardent wiſh that you who are 'ſet for the defence of the goſpel, would 'exert yourſelves in order to ſo important 'an object. It is with a view of exciting 'you to this, that we preſume to publiſh 'the preſent addreſs.

'Far be it from us to ſuggeſt or indulge a 'wiſh, that you ſhould call in the aid of

'the civil magiſtrate to reſtrain thoſe, who 'with ſo much ſucceſs preach or write in 'defence of any erroneous opinions whatſo-'ever. We are fully perſuaded, that all 'have an equal right to think for them-'ſelves, and to publiſh their opinions in 'what manner they pleaſe.'

In reply to this repreſentation of the tendency of the opinions of thoſe called ſocinians, I would only obſerve; that unleſs it be deiſm, to believe in a God, and a Providence, and a future *eternal* life undiſcoverable by nature's light, and made known only by the goſpel of Chriſt, unitarians are far from favouring or leading to it. And who are the faireſt critics, and interpreters of the ſacred writings, and whether the doctrine of atonement be contained in them, and honourable to God, you will have ſome opportunity of judging in the farther peruſal of theſe ſheets.

Much about the ſame time with the foregoing, was publiſhed by Dr. Bell, prebendary of Weſtminſter, a poſthumous piece, intitled *Declaration de mes derniers ſentimens ſur*

ſur les différens dogmes de la religion, par feu (*k*) Pierre François le Courayer; in which, among

(*k*) He was a perſon of remarkable ſimplicity of manners, and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, and of a conſtant even chearfulneſs, befitting the innocence of his life, and his well-grounded hopes of exchanging it for a better. I lived formerly for months together under the ſame roof with him, in a noble family, who had been his friendly protectors, from the time of his being forced to fly his country for his religious opinions. What the ſociety of St. Genevieve in Paris is now, I know not: but upwards of 30 years ago, when I ſaw ſeveral of the order both there and in the provinces, they retained a high eſteem for this good father, *ce bon pere*, as his familiar friends were wont to call him, and inherited a portion of his liberal ſpirit. The librarian of St. Genevieve in particular, the ſame I believe, who ſucceeded him in that honourable poſt, deeply regretted to me in private, that load of ſuperſtition and idolatry, to which he was a daily witneſs, and moſt ardently wiſhed for a reformation.

I ſaw Dr. Le Courayer in the year 1774, when he was 93, and had loſt his ſight, but in other reſpects enjoyed his faculties very well.

At the very moment that this is paſſing through the preſs, March 25, I receive a preſent from the truly learned and my much eſteemed friend Dr. Kippis, of his Life of Dr. Lardner, replete with many curious circumſtances and facts, which tend to illuſtrate the writings, and to give us a fuller knowlege of the character of that excellent perſon. And I cannot but be particularly pleaſed to find my ſentiments

among other things, this learned foreigner, who had taken refuge among us, diſcovers himſelf to have been a believer of the divine unity in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, rejecting the notion of the ſpirit being any thing diſtinct from God himſelf, and conſidering Jeſus Chriſt as nothing but a human creature, and the inſtrument employed by the Divine Being, and inveſted by him with extraordinary wiſdom, and powers. It were to have been wiſhed, that he had dropt intirely

concurring with thoſe of this his judicious writer, with regard to the late Dr. Le Courayer, and the preſent growing prevalence of the opinions called ſocinian, reſpecting the perſon of Chriſt. What Dr. Kippis obſerves concerning the former, I ſhall tranſcribe.

'The celebrated Father Le Courayer, author of the diſ-
'ſertation on the validity of engliſh ordinations, continued
'to the end of his life in the communion of the roman
'catholic church. Nevertheleſs in the declaration of his
'laſt ſentiments on the doctrines of religion, recently pub-
'liſhed, he has delivered ſuch views of things reſpecting
'the Trinity, as Dr. Lardner himſelf muſt have highly
'approved. The paſſage is ſo ſtriking and breathes ſo li-
'beral a ſpirit, that I ſhall inſert it below."

The Life of Dr. *Lardner*, p. lxi. lxii.

N. B. A great part of Dr. Kippis's quotation is given you by me.

tirely the words, *trinity*, *incarnation*, when he actually and profeſſedly retained nothing of what is commonly intended by them. But he might imagine, that he ſhould thus give leſs offence, and more eaſily remove the prejudices of his readers. It is not a good precedent however, and *name* and *thing* were better to be abandoned together.

We are told in the preface, that the manuſcript was given by the author to the late princeſs Amelia, who had the higheſt eſteem for him; and who, at her death, bequeathed it to Dr. Bell. Dr. Le Courayer in putting it into the princeſs's hands, wiſhed it not to be made public in his life-time, for fear of any diſagreeable conſequences, and the reflections that might be caſt upon him for it. But as that period is paſt, and he has been long out of the reach of mortal things, and it is apparent that he intended it ſhould one day be printed, the literary and chriſtian world are indebted to the truly learned and reſpectable editor, for the honourable part he has acted, in not ſuppreſſing free religious ſentiments; which ſome have been known to do in ſituations like his; but fairly producing

ducing them before the public. I ſhall make one or two extracts from it (*l*).

A declaration of my laſt ſentiments on the different doctrines of religion.

'BEING ſoon to appear before God, (begins the venerable writer, then in his 86th year) and deſirous to act the ſincere part which becomes every one, as well as to furniſh all, into whoſe hands this writing may fall, with that teſtimony which all perſons owe to truth; urged likewiſe by my conſcience to declare my thoughts on the doctrines of chriſtianity, and the differences which divide chriſtian ſocieties, I proceed to do it with that ſimplicity and integrity which become a man in the near proſpect of death.

'I believe, (p. 5.) that there is but one God; and that his ſpirit is not a ſubſtance diſtinct from him; and that Jeſus Chriſt, to whom the deity was moſt intimately

(*l*) There is a tranſlation of this tract, with an account of Dr. Le Courayer prefixed, printed for Johnſon, St. Paul's church-yard.

mately united, is his ſon, by virtue of that union. This is all the *trinity*, that I find in the goſpel. And I have no conception that any other kind of trinity can accord with the unity of God. I know that many of the fathers have had recourſe to the multiplication of ſubſtances, to give us an idea of this myſtery; and others have imagined other ſyſtems, which ſavoured more of philoſophy than of the goſpel, and ſerved rather to darken the ſubject than to throw light upon it. But I make a wide difference between theſe ſyſtems and the goſpel; and my deep reſpect for the latter makes me think it of little conſequence to adopt notions, which often have much obſcurity in them, and are ſometimes involved in contradiction.

"The *incarnation* moreover has nothing in it contrary to the doctrine of the unity of God, any more than the *trinity*. Accordingly, it is extremely remarkable, that neither Jeſus Chriſt, nor his apoſtles, have ever repreſented theſe myſteries to us, as containing any thing incomprehenſible, or not to be reconciled to reaſon. God being deſirous

deſirous to draw men from their errors, and purify them from their ſins, filled Jeſus Chriſt with his wiſdom, inveſted him with his power, *gave not the ſpirit by meaſure* (John iii. 34) *to him*, as to the prophets; but united himſelf intimately to him, ſo that Jeſus Chriſt appeared (Phil. ii. 6.) in *the form* of God; who conſtituted him (Acts ii. 36.) Lord and Chriſt, prince (v. 31.) and Saviour; . . . . . by imparting to him his power and authority, made him at the ſame time a partaker of his glory, ſo that *he that honoureth the ſon* (John v. 23.) *honoureth the father who hath ſent him.* And thus, every thing being conſtantly referred to God, and not terminating in Jeſus Chriſt, who is conſidered only as the organ and inſtrument of the power and mercy of the Father, it is always God alone who is the object of our adorations; and there is nothing that ſhocks us in conceiving, that HE can communicate himſelf to *a man* as fully, and as intimately, as he judges it neceſſary for his own glory, and the ſalvation of mankind."

SEC-

SECTION IX.

Chriſt's power neceſſarily limited. How far it is to be ſuppoſed, that he paſſed through childhood, and youth, without any faults or breach of duty. That he was of a nature liable to fall into ſin, acknowleged by himſelf, and declared by his apoſtle. Of the limitations of Chriſt's knowlege, and the inſtances of it produced by Dr. Prieſtley.

THE inference that I would make from the arguments in the foregoing ſection, and from theſe two extraordinary teſtimonies, is; that as the evidence is ſo ſtrong and unſurmountable; and all the rational unprejudiced world, who turn their minds to religion and the ſacred writings, are ſeeing it every day more and more, *viz.* that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was truly one of the human race, diſtinguiſhed only from the reſt of mankind

kind by favourable circumſtances of providence in his birth, by extraordinary gifts of a divine power and wiſdom upon entering on his great office and public miniſtry, and by his conſummate piety, and virtue: it cannot be blameable in any one, taking the ſcripture for his guide, as Dr. Prieſtley has done, to inquire into the character, and the extent of the power, belonging to this favoured man, and meſſenger of heaven.

As being one of the human kind then, you will be perſuaded, that Jeſus the ſon of Mary, muſt have become every thing gradually, by little and little; and through the attention, and help of thoſe about him, he acquired the powers of ſpeech, memory, reaſon; and the different habits which belong to human creatures.

In his progreſſive acquiſitions and improvements from his infancy, to the attainment of ſuch a degree and ſtability of piety, benevolence, and virtuous ſelf-government, which he appears to have poſſeſſed, when he entered on his divine office of teacher and ſaviour of mankind, at thirty years of age; that

that during this long period, he had, from the firſt, and all along, been exempt from the heedleſſneſs, and little follies of a child, and never afterwards ſubject to any neglect or faults, ſo as to need the being told of them, or to correct himſelf for them, you will judge whether it be compatible with any idea of a human being, and whether the ſuppoſition of ſuch things would detract from our idea of the perfection of ſuch a being afterwards. It is certain, that by the diſcipline and correction of errors, and infirmities, propenſities and inclinations to wrong things, though not allowed or indulged, we learn to dread ſin and evil as children to dread the fire by coming too near to it; a habit of vigilance and circumſpection is acquired, and we become more ſtrongly diſpoſed to, bent upon, and more laſtingly and unchangeably formed to and fixed in virtue and all goodneſs.

So far as the ſacred hiſtory ſays any thing of our Lord's infant ſtate, and youthful character, and improvements, they do not contradict

tradict this idea of their being like thoſe of others of mankind, in ſimilar ſituations.

St. Luke ſays of him, ii. 40. 52. *And the child grew and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit, filled with wiſdom: and the favour of God was upon him.—And Jeſus increaſed in wiſdom, and age, and in favour with God and man.*

Of John the Baptiſt, the ſame hiſtorian i. 15. 80. *he ſhall be filled with the holy ſpirit from his mother's womb. And the child grew and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit.*

It is alſo ſaid of Samuel, the prophet, 1 Sam. ii. 26. iii. 19. *And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour with the* LORD, *and alſo with men. And Samuel grew, and the* LORD *was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground.*

Now from this comparative language of ſcripture concerning theſe three perſons, we conclude, that our Lord, like the prophet Samuel, and John the baptiſt, who had alſo an eſpecial deſignation from heaven; was, from his infancy, turned to God, by his providential care, which met him at his birth, and furniſhed the means

of

of a pious education: and that together with his years, the goodneſs of his diſpoſition, his piety, humility, integrity, benevolence, increaſed; and, from ſmall beginnings, were continually ſtrengthened and improved. For theſe could not, that we know of, be infuſed, perfect, all at once, into him, or any *human* being; nor do any ſuppoſe it to have happened but by a gradual proceſs, in Samuel and John the baptiſt; the ſame therefore is to be concluded concerning Chriſt.

2. You perceive, that ſimilar language is uſed concerning the divine extraordinary protection over Samuel and John the baptiſt, as over Chriſt, though they were characters far inferior to him. But we do not conclude thoſe two men to have been under the immediate direction of God in any thing, except what related to their prophetic office, in aſcertaining and fulfilling their divine miſſion, and was beyond the reach of their natural powers. Neither have we any grounds to conclude otherwiſe concerning our Lord: but that in ordinary things even relating to his miniſtry, where natural abilities ſufficed, he acted according to his

beſt judgment; which in him appears to have been moſt ſtrong, acute, and comprehenſive.

3. And as theſe two prophets, Samuel and John the baptiſt, all will confeſs, were men liable to fall: ſo have we no reaſon to conclude, that Chriſt was impeccable. He himſelf appears to have thought, and to have been ſenſible of the contrary, when under his diſtreſsful apprehenſions in the garden of Gethſemane, *(m)* he prayed ſo earneſtly to be ſupported under the heavy trial, leſt he ſhould not be able to go through it with proper fortitude, but ſhrink from it. *St. Paul ſays,* Heb. iv. 15. *he was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without ſin.*

If he had not been liable to fall, you will conſider, whether it would not have been frivolous and a kind of mockery to put temptations before him; *i. e.* to put in his

(m) And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, ſaying; O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me! nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Matt. xxvi. 39.

his way what could not affect him, what would be no trial to him.

Mr. Tucker, the excellent author of the "Light of Nature purſued," though no one, perhaps ever more intirely harmonized with Dr. Prieſtley in his ſentiments on the doctrine of neceſſity, and the perſon of Chriſt, does nevertheleſs here take a contrary part: and ſuppoſes our Lord to have been preſerved, in the moſt intire rectitude, without a wiſh or deſire for inſtance, of this world's eaſe, or pleaſure, or greatneſs, from his very childhood, by a continual divine agency upon him. 'This height of perfection,' ſays he, 'which nature cannot reach, it may be raiſed to by divine interpoſition: and the man Jeſus having this interpoſition to aſſiſt him continually, might actually be that wiſe man which the philoſophers ſought in vain, and which was no where elſe to be found, but in imagination.' See alſo what immediately follows, p. 168. vol. viii. *(n)*.

Whether

(*n*) The ſame writer adds ſoon after, p. 170. upon the ſame ſubject: 'It was fitting that the divine power ſhould

Whether now it be not agreeable to ſcripture juſtly interpreted, and more conſiſtent with, and ſuitable to our Lord's character as

'not be joined with extraordinary endowments of body and 'mind, leſt the effects of them ſhould be confounded with 'the fruits of moral wiſdom: therefore the filial character 'was united to an illiterate carpenter, who, we need not 'imagine gained more knowlege thereby in mathematics, 'aſtronomy, geography, policy, metaphyſics or other 'ſciences, than any common carpenter might have attain-'ed, if we could ſuppoſe him never once to have neglected 'the improvement of his talents. What ſupernatural know-'lege he had, was imparted to him, and the wonders he 'worked were performed, by the father, in the ſame man-'ner as thoſe of Moſes and the prophets.'

If I do not miſtake, this worthy perſon ſeems to ſpeak too degradingly of our Saviour's natural parts and abilities, though I am far from ſaying that in his ſituation, they would have carried him to deep knowlege in mathematics, and aſtronomy. But ſurely, the ſublime ſimplicity of his inſtructions, his ſingular preſence of mind and the remarkable aptneſs and acuteneſs of his replies upon all occaſions, together with the beauty and correctneſs of his imagination in his parables, mark what we call a fine genius above the common rate.

As to Mr. Tucker's quaint term of *filial character*, which he ſometimes alſo calls *God* in his *ſecond perſon*; it appears that all he meant by it, was the divine power or gifts imparted in Chriſt. He uſed this language to avoid offence, and appear orthodox; when he was, as has been elſewhere

as a man, to have been ſo near perfection, as he appears to have been, by the means and aſſiſtance afforded him, without ſuch a continual operation upon him, although he fell ſhort of abſolute perfection; you will determine, on weighing well the matter.

To thoſe who do not attend to the overwhelming evidence ſketched out above, teſtifying our Saviour to have been originally and truly a man, and conſequently of very limited powers, Dr. Prieſtley will appear to have given a moſt degrading repreſentation of him, in what Dr. Horne has picked up and put together, in a very uncandid manner, from different parts of his works, p. 16, 17. of his undergraduate's letter. He makes you, who are real undergraduates and commencing your ſtudy of the ſcriptures, parties with him of courſe: but you will not prejudge the cauſe, till you

elſewhere ſhewn, a compleat unitarian: a compliance much to be lamented, though he gave into it from a good deſign, as he thought. See "An Hiſtorical view of the ſtate of the unitarian doctrine and worſhip," &c. p. 406. &c.

have heard what the party accuſed has to ſay for himſelf.

You have juſt now ſeen, what ignorance in many things, Mr. Tucker ſcruples not to aſcribe to Chriſt; in mathematics, in natural philoſophy, &c. Now ſuppoſing, that our Lord alſo, which ſeems to be the ſentiment of Dr. Prieſtley, had held thoſe called demoniacs in the ſcripture to have been really poſſeſſed by demons, whoſe diſorder we now know to have been owing to natural cauſes, and cureable, where the cure is poſſible, by natural means; this would be not the leaſt impeachment to his ſufficiency, for his office of teacher of the divine will to men, any more than his ignorance of the true ſyſtem of the world, ſince diſcovered by Sir Iſaac Newton.

Put the caſe alſo, that our Saviour had applied a text of the Old Teſtament, as relating to himſelf, which did not to you, or others, appear to be ſuch: without affirming any thing, ſuppoſe only that it was ſo; it would not affect his character as a teacher come from God: which was not to explain exactly each particle of the hebrew ſcriptures;

ſcriptures; but to declare, with authority from God, what men were to do to be happy, and to teach them how to ſecure his favour for ever.

Among the other things, quoted from Dr. Prieſtley, Dr Horne brings him in ſaying, 'that the ſcripture aſſertion, that Chriſt '*knew no ſin*, means much the ſame with 'St. John's aſſertion, (1 John iii. 9.) that 'a true chriſtian *cannot commit ſin*, that is, '*cannot commit any act of groſs ſin.*' I cannot do better than let you hear Dr. Prieſtley's own words, leſt you ſhould hence conclude, that in his eſtimate our Saviour was in nothing above the ordinary rate of ſincere chriſtians. *Theol. Repoſ.* p. 445.

"It will be ſaid, that if Chriſt's virtues were properly *his own*, and of courſe imperfect, he might be liable to *ſin*, as well as ſubject to *error*. I anſwer, that I know of no inconvenience to chriſtianity, in ſuppoſing, that neither he, nor any other man, was *naturally impeccable*. He himſelf lays no claim to any ſuch prerogative, and the object of his miſſion did not require it. He ſays, indeed, to the jews, John viii. 46.

Which of you convinceth me of ſin? but by *ſin*, in that place, the connexion naturally leads us to underſtand, *impoſture* only: and when he was ſtiled *good*, thinking, we may ſuppoſe, from the manner in which it was ſaid, that more was meant by the appellation that he was intitled to, he expreſsly diſclaimed it, ſaying, *there was none good but God*. If we interpret the language of ſcripture rigorouſly, we muſt ſay, that Job was a perfect character: for it is ſaid of him, Job ii. 3. that *he was a perfect and an upright man*.

" It is alſo ſaid of Zacharias and Elizabeth, *that they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameleſs*. This encomium is certainly equivalent to what is ſaid of Chriſt, 1 Pet. ii. 22. *he did not ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth*, 2 Cor. v. 21. *He made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin*. Heb. vii. 26. *Such a high prieſt became us, who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners*.

" As to thoſe, who lay great ſtreſs on the literal interpretation of ſcripture, and who think

think that we are authorized to infer from the paſſages that I have quoted, that the character of Chriſt muſt have been almoſt infinitely greater than that of other men, I would recommend to their attention, beſides the paſſages quoted above, (which, if alſo interpreted literally, would lead us to conceive of the characters of various other perſons, as being equal to that of Chriſt,) what the apoſtle John ſays concerning all chriſtians, 1 John iii. 9, *Whoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin; for his ſeed remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God.* If this language, reſpecting chriſtians in general, is not to be interpreted literally, what can oblige us to a literal interpretation of ſimilar expreſſions, relating to the excellence of Chriſt's character. And, if in this paſſage, and every other, in which the word *ſin* is uſed, we are to underſtand ſome overt act of iniquity, ſomething that all the world would condemn, as baſe and wrong, we muſt likewiſe reſtrict the meaning of it in the ſame manner, when it is ſaid, that *Chriſt had no ſin*; and it is only from the language of ſcripture, and not

from

from any mere imagination of our own, that we can be authorized to form any judgment in the caſe. *All the virtue that human nature, ſuch as we obſerve it to be, can attain, I am as ready, as any perſon, to aſcribe to Chriſt. There is a greatneſs and dignity in his character, ſuperior to that of any other man. I flatter myſelf that I feel it, and I am ſure that I rejoice in the contemplation of it.* But I think alſo that I can account for the ſuperiority of his virtue, and the exalted nature of his feelings, without ſuppoſing that, till he was divinely inſpired, (which I ſee no occaſion to fix at an earlier period than a little before his baptiſm) he was naturally a greater, or better man, than Abraham, or Joſeph, or Daniel."

This extract will give you Dr. Prieſtley's own ſentiments of Chriſt, ſomewhat different than you would take them to be from the repreſentation of the preſident of Magdalen college: not that he intends to miſlead, but his prejudices magnify objects.

What he concludes with in that place, as ſomething highly wrong in Dr. Prieſtley, he

he couches in theſe words; 'that even 'now, during the interval between his aſcen- 'ſion and ſecond coming, Chriſt is *in a ſtate* 'of *pupillage*.'

Dr. Horne muſt unqueſtionably be diſturbed, that any thing of this ſort ſhould be aſſerted of one, whom he looks upon as the eternal, omniſcient God, and the object of prayer and worſhip; but then, one would think, it ſhould have reſtrained him from dwelling on the idea in a jocular way, if any real occaſion had been given for it; the words, *in a ſtate of pupillage*, being his own.

In whatever language however it be told, the fact is true, that Jeſus Chriſt, who was of the human race, and only brought into exiſtence at the beginning of our chriſtian era, is and muſt be for ever a learner. You will not be ſnrprized at it, as this neceſſarily follows from his being a creature, and therefore of limited powers and attainments.

Whatever improvements he made in moral excellency, *viz.* in piety, integrity and benevolence, in the difficult ſcenes and trials through

through which he paſſed, during his mortal ſtate, and we have reaſon to believe they were far beyond what any others of the human race ever acquired, there muſt ſtill be room for greater in an endleſs progreſſion, in his devout and delightful endeavours, in that other world, to know more of, and to copy after, *the infinitely holy, and all-perfect Being*; between whom, and the moſt exalted of his creatures, though they ſhall be ever growing in knowlege and virtue, and goodneſs, the diſtance will ſtill be infinite, as when they firſt ſet out in their career.

Thoſe diſcoveries of that exquiſite ſymmetry, and art, with which every thing in the world of nature is made, and adjuſted; the moſt wonderful ſimplicity, in the little that mankind have hitherto been able to trace, of thoſe laws, by which the whole ſyſtem of viſible orbs around us, in one of which we have our habitation, is ſupported and governed, *preſcribed even to hours, minutes, moments*, and adapted at the ſame time to the beſt ends, and to general happineſs: theſe views of the infinite, benevolent artiſt, which

which ſanctified the mind of *Boyle*, which led *Newton* to ſee and adore HIM preſent every where; which filled the heart of the Swediſh philoſopher *(o)* with continual raptures of devout admiration, whilſt, with immenſe

(o) The devotional turn of Dr. *Linnæus's* mind, void of all ſuperſtition, and truly rational, is ſeen throughout all his writings, where it could naturally have a place. I give a little ſpecimen of it from the concluſion of an oration, which he ſpoke at Upſal, in 1741, when he was admitted to the royal and ordinary profeſſion of phyſic.

Firſt, to thee, o omnipotent God, I humbly offer up my thankſgiving, for the immenſe benefits that have been heaped upon me, through thy gracious protection and providence.

Thou, from my youth upwards, haſt ſo led me by thy hand, haſt ſo directed my footſteps, that I have grown up in the ſimplicity and innocence of life, and in the moſt ardent purſuit after knowlege.

I give thee thanks that thou haſt preſerved me in all my journies, through my native and foreign countries, amidſt ſo many dangers, that ſurrounded me on every ſide.

That in the reſt of my life, amidſt the heavieſt burdens of poverty and other inconveniencies, thou waſt always preſent to ſupport me with thy almighty aſſiſtance.

Laſtly, that amidſt ſo many viciſſitudes of fortune, to which I have been expoſed, amongſt all the goods and evils, the joyful and gloomy, the pleaſing and diſagreeable circumſtances of life, thou endowedſt me with an equal, conſtant, manly, and ſuperior ſpirit on every occaſion.

immenſe labour, in paths untrodden before, he ſurveyed the undeſcribeable art and goodneſs, ſcattered with vaſt profuſion through the vegetable, foſſil and animal worlds, which he was raiſed up to record and illuſtrate, and alſo to make diſciples, who ſhould carry on the execution of his plan: theſe views, I ſay, of the great creator, which, the holy Jeſus's nobler office and employment, in laying a foundation for reſcuing mankind from the chains and miſeries of vice and ignorance, and bringing them to virtue and immortality, would not allow him leiſure to ſtudy and contemplate here, will furniſh him with new and unceaſing ſongs of praiſe and adoration.

We cannot refrain, at ſome hours, from thus making conjectures concerning a character we ſo much honour, and to whom we are ſo much indebted, and his employment in that other world, though we muſt neceſſarily babble in a great meaſure, like children, upon a circumſtance ſo much at preſent beyond us. One thing however we may be certain of, with reſpect to the place of our future deſtination, of thoſe among

among us who ſhall be ſo happy as to approve ourſelves here to our maker; that if, upon creatures ſuch as we are, in their beginning imperfect ſtate, ſuch a world as this has been beſtowed, furniſhed with ſuch a laviſh abundance of things delightful and agreeable to every ſenſe; with ſo much beauty, variety and uſefulneſs in all its parts, that the labours and ingenuity of men, for ſo many thouſand years that they have been placed upon it, have diſcovered only ſo much as ſhews that infinitely more yet remains to be brought to light: what may not be expected from the ſame munificent hand, when thoſe creatures ſhall, by his favour to them, have been made more perfect, and worthy of his regard!

SECTION X.

The ſufficiency of Chriſt for his office of teacher and ſaviour of the world, does not depend upon his miraculous conception. Dr. Prieſtley's

ley's *reaſons for his opinion concerning it. How the queſtion is to be decided.*

One of the charges brought againſt Dr. Prieſtley by Dr. Horne, in your names, is, that he looks upon Chriſt as a mere man, born like other men, the ſon of Joſeph and Mary; thereby denying his miraculous conception.

Now, whether our Lord was the ſon of Joſeph and Mary in the ordinary way of propagation of the human race, or the ſon of Mary only, by the operation of the extraordinary power of God, is in itſelf an indifferent matter. In one way, as well as in the other, he would be equally fitted for the purpoſes of his divine miſſion, and equally to be honoured. For there is no merit or real worth in being born in ſuch an extraordinary way, any more than in being born of a rich and noble family, rather than that of a beggar.

There is however no preſumption againſt a miracle of this kind, to ſerve the purpoſes of divine providence at that time. And one obvious uſe of it may ſeem to have been the ſecuring a proper attention in Joſeph and Mary to the pious and virtuous education

of

of the child: which was a thing of vaſt conſequence.

But it was not a miracle of ſuch a kind as to be alleged in proof of our Lord's divine miſſion; and therefore is never mentioned as ſuch. And this, together with the delicate circumſtances of the fact, may have been the cauſe of its being ſeldom talked of, and not much known, during our Lord's miniſtry, and in the time of his apoſtles.

As to the abſurdities of the fathers, as they are called, upon this ſubject, in the following times, they ſerve to ſhew the folly of the men, but do not invalidate the fact itſelf.

The point then in queſtion ſeems to be, what ſay the ſcriptures?

Dr. Prieſtley, after a very ſerious examination, and laying the reſult of it, and his arguments, before the public, is perſuaded, that the beginning of Matthew's, and of Luke's goſpels, which treat of the miraculous conception, do not contain a conſiſtent account of things, and alſo have not equal external evidence of teſtimony for their having been compoſed by Matthew

and Luke, as have the other parts of their goſpel-hiſtory. Other perſons acknowlege theſe to be difficulties in reconciling the narratives; but do not think thoſe difficulties of ſufficient force to counterbalance and ſet aſide the poſitive evidence, which appears to them to remain for their authenticity, after all deductions made. You, who are able, are to form your own judgments. It is of no conſequence to us as chriſtians, what is the deciſion, any farther than as one at leaſt of the evangeliſts has delivered a peremptory account of the fact, it is deſirable to have ſatisfaction concerning it. There muſt be a freedom in diſcuſſing doubtful points in hiſtory, ſacred or profane, to come at the truth; in the ſame manner as in inquiries on natural ſubjects, you make many experiments that fail, before you arrive at the *experimentum crucis*. If any one can ſolve Dr. Prieſtley's doubts, and reſtore the credit of the hiſtory in his mind, no one will be more ready to retract what he has advanced. And if the miraculous conception has been the invention of ſome early over-zealous chriſtians to do honour to Chriſt, when this is made

made to appear, and ſatisfactory evidence obtained how it was adopted or foiſted into the ſacred code, in any degree like that which we ſee of the ſpuriouſneſs of the text of the *three witneſſes*, 1 John. v. 7. all judicious chriſtians will readily give it up.

SECTION XI.

Chriſt's ſhedding of his blood, how to be underſtood. Sacrifices, their origin, and intent. Nothing done by Chriſt to atone for mens' ſins, or to make God more favourable and propitious than he was before. Repentance is all that is neceſſary to recommend ſinners to the divine mercy and favour. Chriſt's interceſſion, what intended by it.

VERY much diſſatisfied with the explication of the apoſtle Paul's language of Chriſt *entering into heaven by his blood*, given in the ſequel to the apology for reſigning the living of Catterick, p. 90, as ſignifying only his meritorious obedience unto death, which

gave him admiſſion there and favour with God: Dr. Horne thus expreſſes himſelf upon it. 'But is this the parallel intended 'by the apoſtle to the caſe of *the high-* '*prieſt*, who *entered not without blood, which* '*he offered for himſelf and the ſins of the* '*people?* Muſt not *this man* (Chriſt) as the 'apoſtle himſelf argues, *have ſomething alſo* '*to* OFFER? And did he not therefore *offer* '*his own blood for the ſins of the people?* '(himſelf he had none). He did; and the 'apoſtle by the parallel meant to ſay that 'he did: he actually does ſay ſo. But Dr. 'Prieſtley and Mr. Lindſey ſay, there 'neither was nor could be any ſuch thing. 'Their reaſon tells them, there was no 'atonement by the blood of Chriſt; and 'their conſciences, as we are to ſuppoſe, 'tell them, they need none.' Undergraduate's letter to Dr. Prieſtley, p. 42, 43.

Perſons who have long been in the habit of impoſing on themſelves by the uſe of figurative terms of ſcripture in the groſs, as if there was ſome great myſtery contained in them, may thus talk crudely of Chriſt *offering his blood:* but you, who are learning from

from your inſtructors, and from the excellent Locke on the human underſtanding, to analyze the proper meaning of words in the authors you read, would not have ſat down ſo contented, but would have tried, if ſome more light into the matter was not to be attained.

You would have conſidered, that a man's *entering into heaven by his blood*, cannot be taken literally. *Entering into heaven*, in the caſe of Chriſt, you would have found to have been, his being tranſlated from this earth, after having been raiſed from the dead in three days, to a ſtate of high favour with God, and the poſſeſſion of immortal life, by the divine power.

You would have next inquired, how could this be effected by his blood, by ſhedding or offering his blood? Blood itſelf, the red fluid, is a thing of no moral value. But blood being the life of man, the ſhedding of it, or voluntary giving up of life, may be praiſe worthy, according to the motives influencing to it.

What was there then, you would have proceeded to aſk, in Chriſt ſhedding his

blood, or voluntarily parting with his life, which was ſo acceptable to the Divine Being, and procured him ſuch honourable diſtinction, not only for himſelf to *enter into heaven*, as now explained; but alſo to be the means of drawing others thither after him, *to obtain (p)* ETERNAL *redemption for us*, as the apoſtle ſpeaks in the ſame place?

The ſcriptures you would farther perceive, inform us, that it was Chriſt's zeal, and labours, and fortitude, in preaching the truth,

(p) Redemption is the recovery of a thing by purchaſe or price of ſome kind or other, as men were redeemed or delivered from ſlavery, in antient times, by money paid down for them. Hence the word is transferred to ſignify a redemption or deliverance of any kind, or procured in any other way. Thus the Divine Being is called the redeemer of the Iſraelites, in bringing them out of ſlavery in Egypt; and Moſes is alſo ſaid to be their redeemer, as he was the divine inſtrument employed in it. And thus Chriſt is our redeemer, in being ſent and employed by almighty God, to deliver mankind from their ſins and the fatal conſequences of them, if perſiſted in. The means uſed by Chriſt were the doctrine and powerful motives of the goſpel, to which he gave atteſtation as coming from God, by dying or ſhedding his blood in its defence. The redemption of the world therefore by Chriſt, is their deliverance from ſin, and reſtoration to the divine favour for ever by the means and motives of the goſpel.

truth, in fulfilling and executing his truſt from God, and at laſt willingly giving himſelf up to death in confirmation of that doctrine which was of moſt unſpeakable benefit to mankind, that gave him ſuch favour in the ſight of the heavenly father. In one place, after having deſcribed himſelf as *the good ſhepherd*; who took care of his flock; and expoſed his life for it, he remarks: *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I might take it again.* John x. 17; and the apoſtle ſays, *he became obedient to death, even the death of the croſs. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him*, &c. Thus then he obtained eternal redemption or deliverance for us. For his eminent virtue and obedience he was honoured with being made the firſt and chief inſtrument of delivering men from a ſtate of ſin and death, and bringing them to virtue and eternal felicity.

That Dr. Horne ſhould expreſs an extreme aſtoniſhment at this interpretation of the ſcripture-language of the blood of Chriſt, is not difficult to be accounted for from his early impreſſions and prejudices, and by

his having been taught to conſider the ſhedding of the blood of animals and the ſacrifices in the Old Teſtament, as methods of appeaſing the wrath and diſpleaſure of God for the ſins of men, originally inſtituted with a reference to the future ſacrifice and death of Chriſt, who alone was held able to make ſatisfaction for the actual tranſgreſſions of men, and for original ſin, *(q)* the ſin of our firſt parents, in the guilt of which our whole race are ſuppoſed to be involved.

Thus the dark heathen idea (for no other could be its origin) of appeaſing the wrath of their falſe gods, commonly men deified, by the blood of animals, and oftentimes by human victims, has been applied by chriſtians to the moſt merciful God; as if nothing leſs than the death of Chriſt, ſuppoſed to be a being equal to himſelf, could interpoſe effectually, ſo as to diſpoſe him to pardon the ſinner.

(q) Chriſt, very God, and very man, truly ſuffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a ſacrifice, not only for original guilt, but alſo for actual ſins of men. Article ii. of the church of England. See alſo Art. ix. xxxi.

But by examining the ſcriptures for yourſelves, you will learn, that whatever was the origin of ſacrifices, as a religious rite; whether of mere human invention, or of divine ſuggeſtion ſuited to the groſs infant ſtate of the world; they were nothing more than ways of expreſſing by ſymbols, or outward ſigns, mens' ſentiments and reverential regards for the almighty being, who made them, and on whom they depended for every thing; either in intreating pardon for their offences, or begging the continuance of his bleſſings and manifold goodneſs to them, and giving thanks for it.

No value is at any time put upon ſacrifices, in the ſcriptures, but as they were ſignificant of and accompanied with theſe becoming, correſpondent, penitent and devout tempers of mind. This is their conſtant language. See Iſaiah i. to name one inſtance only. The ſacrifice which alone could render the ſinner acceptable to God, was not a bleeding victim, but *a broken and contrite heart*. So ſaid David (Pſ. li.) when labouring under the guilt of crimes of the firſt magnitude, murder and adultery.

adultery. He had no recourſe to ſacrifice, but to repentance, to wipe it away.

Moſes, the divine lawgiver of the Iſraelites, never teaches, that the ſacrifices, which he preſcribed to them, were types of, prefigured, or had any reference to the death of Chriſt. This application ingenious men have ſince invented for him. But he injoins them as religious ceremonies, or ways of worſhip, of divine appointment, to keep them from idolatry, and in the worſhip of Jehovah their God, the only living and true God, and in a juſt obedience to his laws.

He never informs them, that the ſacrifices, or any part of the ritual he ordained, could waſh away moral guilt: no, not even that ſacrifice which was offered on their annual day of atonement. Their rites and ſacrifices were of avail no farther, than to compenſate for their breach and neglect of their ceremonial law.

The apoſtle, Heb. x. 4. thus ſpeaks concerning the ſacrifice on their great day of atonement. *It is not poſſible, that the blood of bulls and goats ſhould take away ſin.* And ix. 13, 14. *If the blood of bulls and of goats, and*

and the aſhes of an heifer ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the fleſh; i. e. being ſprinkled on thoſe who were under ceremonial uncleanneſs, removed thoſe legal impurities which were a bar to their attendance on the public worſhip: *how much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who, through the eternal ſpirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your conſciences from dead works to ſerve the living God?* i. e. how much more ſhall that full aſſurance which you have of the pardon of your ſins, and of the divine favour for ever, confirmed by the blood, or death of Chriſt in atteſtation of it, be effectual to reclaim and recover the ſinner to the ſincere obedience of God's laws.

The greater part of chriſtians, for want of a little light into this ſubject, have their minds ſorely bewildered with the ſcripture-phraſes, *redeemed, ſaved, waſhed, by the blood of Chriſt*, &c. &c. It will be your buſineſs, and a high ſatisfaction to thoſe among you who are intended for the ſacred miniſtry, to free them from this perplexity; for which, what has been now remarked, will furniſh you with an eaſy clue. When,

for

for inſtance, Rev. i. 2. Chriſt is ſaid to *have loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood*; you will ſatisfy them, that all that is intended by this figurative language, is; that Chriſt was willing to die for our ſakes (as we are alſo to be ready to die, 1 John iii. 16, for each others good), that by that holy doctrine, which he ſealed with his blood or by his death, we might be led to ceaſe from evil, and to become holy and good.

So 1 John i. 7, we are told, *the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin.* Nothing can cleanſe us from ſin, but what brings the ſinner to forſake it. And the doctrine and motives of the goſpel confirmed by the blood or death of Chriſt, are moſt efficacious to this end.

You will tell them moreover, that the reaſon why the New Teſtament writers adopt this way of ſpeaking, was merely in alluſion to their antient religion, which conſiſted much in ſacrifices, waſhings, &c. But they uſed it alſo, when ſpeaking of other things, and did not apply it ſolely to Chriſt.

So

So Rom. xii. 1. we are injoined to *offer our bodies a ſacrifice.* Phil. iv. 19. contributing to the ſupport of the goſpel, is held *a ſacrifice acceptable, well-pleaſing to God.* Heb. xiii. 15. prayer is called a *ſacrifice.* Now it is readily acknowleged, that these were none of them real ſacrifices. Neither was Chriſt's death a real ſacrifice. But in the epiſtle to the Hebrews, where ſuch ſacrifical language is moſt of all uſed, the apoſtle was neceſſitated and called out as it were, to dwell upon the death of Chriſt, in language alluſive to their ſacrifices and hebrew ritual, as his deſign was to ſhew the ſuperiority of the chriſtian to the jewiſh diſpenſation, and to contraſt the real advantages received by the death of Chriſt with thoſe they ſuppoſed they had from their jewiſh ſacrifices, and to point out how far the former ſurpaſſed theſe. It was ſurely natural for our Saviour and his apoſtles, as jews, to ſpeak of the things of the goſpel in language borrowed from their former divine religion and worſhip. The great miſtake of many of Chriſt's followers has been, in interpreting literally, what

what they ſpake only in a figurative ſenſe, and by way of illuſtration.

Since Chriſt's voluntary death, or ſacrifice of himſelf, as the ſcriptures ſometimes term it, was thus nothing more than an act of obedience to God, in atteſtation and confirmation of his divine miſſion and doctrine, by which mankind were to be ſaved, or attain eternal life; you will perceive that it hence follows, that there is no ground for what is called his *(f)* atonement, or making ſatisfaction for the ſins of men by his death, by pacifying the wrath and

(f) It is remarkable, that the word, *atonement*, is never found in the New Teſtament but once, and there it is manifeſtly a miſtranſlation, Rom. v. 11. *And not only ſo, but we alſo joy in God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we have now received the atonement.* Upon which one well remarks; 'I cannot imagine what ſhould induce our tranſ-'lators to render καταλλαγην by *atonement*, when they render 'the verb καταλλασσω by *reconciling* in the foregoing verſe, 'and in all other places; namely, 1 Cor. vii. 11. 2 Cor. 'v. 18, 19, 20, and καταλλαγη in all other places by *recon-'ciliation*, Rom. xi. 15. 2 Cor. v. 18. 19.' Taylor on Romans.

and diſpleaſure of God, as ſome would have it; or, as others, by making reparation for the diſhonour done to the divine law by ſin, in order that the Almighty might pardon it conſiſtently with his juſtice. His death in the cauſe of God and his truth, is a moſt powerful means and motive to bring ſinners to repentance, but can have no effect upon the Divine Being to change or make him better diſpoſed towards us, or to ſet him at liberty to forgive men, which he otherwiſe could not have done.

That Chriſt did nothing by his death, or in any other way, to render God kind and merciful to ſinners; or rather, that God is of his own accord diſpoſed to forgive men their ſins, without Chriſt or any other perſon interpoſing or interfering, and without any other condition than the ſinner's repentance, you find declared by the almighty himſelf, continually and expreſsly in the Old Teſtament, and never after contradicted in the New.

And the LORD *proclaimed, The* LORD, *the* LORD *God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering,*

ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs, and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. *And forgive thy people that have ſinned againſt thee, and all their tranſgreſſions wherein they have tranſgreſſed againſt thee:—for they be thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughteſt forth out of Egypt, from the midſt of the furnace of iron.* Kings viii. 50, 51. *Seek ye the* LORD, *while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the* LORD, *and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Iſ. lv. 6, 7. *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive.* Ez. xviii. 27.

From theſe declarations, which contain the conſtant uniform ſenſe of the Old Teſtament, it appears, that God would have forgiven men their ſins, if Chriſt's death had

had never happened; without any regard had to him. *(g)*.

Hence it follows, that there is no ground in ſcripture for the doctrine entertained by many, that the repentance of the ſinner alone is not ſufficient of itſelf to reſtore him to the divine favour, without ſomething done by Chriſt to render God propitious to him. For if God was ſo graciouſly diſpoſed as to forgive the old world upon their forſaking their

(g) But here it may be objected. What then! wherein is the goſpel to be preferred to the law, if the forgiveneſs of ſins was by the latter equally with the former? What benefit have chriſtians beyond jews? I anſwer: the greateſt that is poſſible to be enjoyed. The Iſraelites were aſſured by Moſes and the prophets, that God would pardon their iniquities on their repentance. But then they were taught nothing further. It was not told them, that the pardoning mercy of God would extend itſelf to continue their exiſtence, and confer favours on them in a future world. They had no explicit revelation made of this. But that their being ſhould be continued, and they be made happy for ever, was a revelation reſerved for him, who alone brought life and immortality to light through the goſpel, 2 Tim. i. 10. This is indeed properly THE GOSPEL; and it was the notification of ſo great a bleſſing to us, of the race of the heathens, which drew from the apoſtles of Jeſus, that exclamation of devout wonder and praiſe, αρα γε και τοις εθνεσιν ο θεος την μετανοιαν εδωκεν εις ζωην· *Then hath God indeed granted unto the gentiles repentance unto life!* Acts xi. 18.

their evil doings, without any one's interposing in their behalf; there is no reason to think that any change has been made in the Divine Mind since, but that he is willing to receive the christian to mercy as readily as the jew.

This most important doctrine of the efficacy of repentance alone on the part of the sinner, as sufficient to recommend him to pardon with God, without any interest or interference of Christ, or of any other person, is confirmed by Christ himself.

Be ye therefore merciful, says he, *as your Father also is merciful*, Luke vi. 36. teaching thereby that the heavenly Father, is of himself most freely disposed to forgive us; very contrary to what some assert, that he will shew no mercy, unless the whole debt of obedience be paid by ourselves, or by another for us.

In the prayer he taught, Matth. vi. 12. 14, 15. we are encouraged to expect an intire forgiveness at the hands of our heavenly Father, if we ourselves are penitent, and forgiving towards our brethren; without any other requisite or condition.

But

But above all, the beautiful and affecting parable of the prodigal ſon, Luke xv. delivered by our Lord, is moſt deciſive, that in his eſtimate, repentance is all the atonement or ſatisfaction for the breach of his laws, which our heavenly Father requires, to reſtore us to his favour.

The doctrine of his apoſtles on this head, is the ſame with that of their divine maſter. It is never declared by them, that Chriſt did any thing to reconcile God to men, but to reconcile men to God. Men were alienated, turned away from God by their ſins: and only on that account, and till they forſook them, God was turned away from them.

You may then conclude, by the teſtimony of Moſes, and all the antient prophets and and of Chriſt himſelf, that, if you forſake your ſins and turn to God, *you have no need of Chriſt, or of any one, as a prieſt or interceſſor, to plead your cauſe, and to reconcile your Maker to you, to diſpoſe him to ſhew mercy and to forgive you.* For he is, and ever has been, of his own accord, without any

one's interfering, favourable and propitious to his penitent creatures.

So directly contrary, therefore to this, cannot be the meaning of that paſſage, (cited in the Undergraduate's Letter, p. 30.) Heb. vii. 24, 25; where St. Paul ſays of Chriſt, *this man, becauſe he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable prieſthood. Wherefore he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them*; and upon which Dr. Horne there complains, and remonſtrates to Dr. Prieſtley, 'We are now 'to be deprived of this moſt important and 'moſt comfortable doctrine, for ſuch, Sir, 'we have always been taught to eſteem it, 'and ſuch indeed it inſtantly and unavoida-'bly beſpeaks itſelf to our minds, namely, 'that we have an advocate and interceſſor 'on high with the Father.'

This refers to what had been obſerved by me in a former work, and is mentioned before, which Dr. Horne thus ſums up, and remarks upon it, as ſomething very monſtrous.

'The prieſthood of Jeſus Chriſt no real part of his character nor needful to be attend-

ed

ed to by his followers! *If this do not open the eyes of mankind, to ſee what is coming amongſt us, they muſt continue for ever cloſed.*'

I have, notwithſtanding, a good hope, that you will think lightly of the alarm which this well meaning but miſtaken perſon would ſpread upon this occaſion; and that you are ſatisfied from what has been ſaid above, that it was incidentally, and merely in reference to the opinions of the jews, to whom he was writing, that St. Paul ſtiles our Saviour a prieſt, and ſpeaks of his prieſthood, without any thing of what Dr. Horne imagines to be intended by, and would include under, that term.

That the apoſtle could intend nothing of the kind thereby, may I not ſay, has juſt now been demonſtrated to you, in the proofs laid before you from the ſcriptures, that mankind, that chriſtians, ſtand not in need of Chriſt, *(h)* or of any one, to go between them

(h) 'I am apt vehemently to ſuſpect, that the prayers of 'our church, frequently concluding, through, or for the ſake 'of Jeſus Chriſt, gives an idea to many perſons, that God 'has no immediate regard for us at all, but beſtows his 'bleſſings purely to gratify his Son, upon thoſe to whom

them and their Maker, and to do any thing to make ſatisfaction for their ſins, and reconcile them to him: for that he is always, of his own free goodneſs, diſpoſed to receive his offending creatures to his mercy, upon their repentance, without Chriſt's, or any other perſon's interference, in their behalf.

Nor did the apoſtle deſign to declare any ſuch interpoſition of Jeſus Chriſt, when he here ſpeaks of his making interceſſion for us. And though Dr. Horne would intimate, that you are not contented with the reaſons given formerly for its not meaning any thing of the kind, I hope you will ſee ſomething worthy of your attention in what follows, in confirmation of that interpretation, and that it will be approved by you.

The word, εντυγχανω, which we render to *intercede*, to make *interceſſion*, is not found in the lxx. In its original root, it ſignifies, to

meet

'*he* has happily taken a liking: and that by the uſe of that 'name, we may move him to do a thing he was indifferent 'to before.' Mr. Tucker's Light of nature purſued, vol. viii. p. 343. N. B. There is no precept in the New Teſtament for praying or aſking any thing of God *for Chriſt's ſake*: nor any example of it. Eph. iv. 32. is a wrong tranſlation.

meet with, to *light upon* any one: whence it has theſe derived ſenſes given it, to *apply* to, to *intreat*, *ſolicit*, to *manage anothers buſineſs*, *take care* of *his intereſts*, *&c.*

Now a due attention to the paſſage before us, will lead us to ſee, what we are to underſtand by Chriſt's interceding for us. Heb. vii. 25. It is ſaid *wherefore he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him; ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.*

To *come to God by Chriſt*, is, to be Chriſt's true diſciple.

To *ſave*, or *ſave to the uttermoſt*, is to bring men to the poſſeſſion of eternal life; which is to be accompliſhed by giving them the means of obtaining it.

Now it is only by Chriſt in the goſpel, that the promiſe of eternal life is made to men, the knowlege of the way to it, and the means of attaining it.

So that the means of being ſaved are, the knowlege of the goſpel, and the ſuperior motives, excitements and aſſurances it affords, to lead men from vice and the world, to the practice of holineſs and all virtue;

without which none can be ſaved, or enter into eternal life.

As to what immediately follows, *viz. ſeeing that he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* This *ever living* ſeems to be ſpoken only with reference to, and in contraſt with the jewiſh high prieſts, who died one after another; whereas, though Chriſt died, he was not left in the ſtate of the dead, but made alive again, and always ready to do what became him. And what is implied in his *ever living to make interceſſion*, or rather, *to manage their intereſts, to aſſiſt them*, is, that the happy effects of the goſpel ſhould never ceaſe.

Hence then we gather, that *Chriſt's interceſſion*, ſignifies, *(i)* or conſiſts in, the ſupplying

(i) Many perſons will be forward to condemn it, as a thing quite wrong and arbitrary, to give this conſtruction of the term *interceſſion*; being impoſed upon by the word, in engliſh, always bearing the ſenſe of aſſiſting another by prayer and intreaties. But it was ſhewn above, that this is only one derived ſenſe of the word in the original, and that it may no leſs properly ſignify to manage mens affairs with a third perſon or aſſiſt them in other ways. As I truſt, that hereafter it will be made to appear, that Chriſt's *ſitting at*

ſupplying of mankind with the means of ſalvation, or of obtaining eternal life.

This he firſt began in his life time, by his preachings, and inſtructions to his apoſtles.

After he left the world, the work was continued and carried on by the gifts of the holy ſpirit, or of a divine power, which he ſent, or which God ſent according to Chriſt's promiſe, to his apoſtles and firſt followers; by which they were enabled to preach the truth, i. e. the goſpel they had heard from him, with wonderful effect and ſucceſs.

And

at the right hand of God, ſignifies the diſplay of the divine extraordinary power that was made in his favour, or for the effectual propagation of the goſpel in the apoſtolic age; the *making interceſſion* there mentioned, Rom. viii. 34. or as it rather ſhould be tranſlated, the *managing their affairs*, muſt refer to the gifts of the ſpirit or of a divine power beſtowed upon his followers, during that period. *Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather, that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo manageth our affairs.* And if, in any paſſages of ſcripture, Chriſt is ſaid to intercede for us, or to manage our intereſts with God, ſince the apoſtolic age, when extraordinary divine gifts were withdrawn; it muſt refer to the written goſpel, the divine inſtructions communicated by Chriſt, and faithfully handed down and ſecured to us by the ordinary means of providence; as he that does any thing by another perſon or thing, may be ſaid to do it himſelf.

And Chriſt's interceſſion, in this ſenſe of the word, has continued ever ſince and now ſubſiſts in thoſe his inſtructions, which we very properly ſtile the word of God, as he received it by inſpiration from him; which alone teach the way to eternal life, and which have been faithfully handed down to us, written and recorded by his apoſtles and apoſtolic men, to our times; and by which ſinners are continually converted, and mankind are taught the way of ſalvation, i. e. of becoming happy for ever in a future world.

But although Chriſt's being called an advocate, (*k*) or interceſſor, does not imply any perſonal

(*k*) Under the title of *advocate*, παρακλητος, which is not ſo well tranſlated *comforter*, our Saviour characterizes and perſonifies the *holy ſpirit*, (John xiv. 16, &c.) or the divine extraordinary powers, which he promiſed on the part of God ſhould be ſent to his diſciples. Theſe divine gifts accordingly were ſent, and were their advocate, pleading their cauſe, the cauſe of the goſpel, moſt effectually; by giving them credit with thoſe to whom they preached, and influencing them to receive it.

The ſame title, John gives his divine maſter, 1 John ii. 1. *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt, the righteous.*

By

perſonal interference, by which he does any thing to reconcile us to God and ſave us from his diſpleaſure: yet it is a thing not to be doubted, but he that prays for, and in that ſenſe of the word, intercedes for us, in the heavenly world where he now is. He that was ſo true a friend, and loved us ſo as to give up his life to promote our happineſs, and with whom we have a promiſe of being with hereafter for ever, cannot but be ardently intereſted for us, and at proper ſeaſons offer up his prayer to God for his brethren of mankind.

But then there is no encouragement given in the ſcriptures, for any particular dependence upon, or expectation from his prayers, any more than the jews might have upon thoſe

By taking this language in the literal ſenſe, many poſſeſs themſelves with a notion, that Chriſt is continually pleading for mankind before God; as if the almighty and merciful needed to be ſtunn'd as it were with repeated petitions, or Chriſt had no other employment. But the real meaning of the expreſſion, which is borrowed from human things, is to inform us, that by Chriſt and his goſpel, his followers are as much aſſured of the favour of God for ever upon their forſaking their ſins, as if they had the moſt powerful advocate in heaven perpetually pleading for them.

thoſe of the prophet Elijah, who they knew would carry along with him his concern for them into the other world, into which he was taken up alive, as Chriſt was.

Thoſe however, who inſiſt ſo much on the office and employment of Chriſt, in praying and interceding for mankind, do not conſider, that it neceſſarily implies his being a dependent creature. For it cannot, without impiety, be ſuppoſed, that God ſhould pray for any thing, to any one. And the doctrine of the two natures of Chriſt, of his being a mortal man, and alſo the eternal God, and of his praying, as man only, in his human nature, and therefore praying to himſelf in his divine nature, is a metaphyſical ſubtlety, chimera, and contradiction, which rational beings ſhould long ago have been aſhamed of and abandoned.

You have now ſeen, that the Divine Being is always of himſelf diſpoſed to ſhew mercy to his penitent creatures, that their repentance alone is ſufficient to recommend them to his favour, without Chriſt or any one interpoſing in their behalf; and that the

ſcriptures

ſcriptures are miſinterpreted and miſrepreſented when it is concluded that Chriſt did any thing to reconcile God, or to make him more kindly diſpoſed to us, from his being therein ſtiled our high prieſt, advocate, interceſſor, or a ſacrifice for ſin: theſe being all of them figurative expreſſions, applied to Chriſt, and alluding to religious rites and ceremonies, to which the jews and other nations, to whom the ſacred writers addreſſed themſelves, had been accuſtomed, and are to be explained in the manner you have ſeen.

SECTION XII.

The late Bp. Butler's *great error, that repentance alone is not ſufficient to obtain pardon of God, without the interpoſition of Jeſus Chriſt. The melancholy deſcription given by him of the divine government. The ſources of his unhappy miſtake. His miſrepreſentations of the world we live in, and its inhabitants. God, and the world, men and their expectations hereafter, far better than his ſyſtem would make them.*

THERE is an author of great and deſerved reſpect,

reſpect, biſhop Butler, whoſe 'Analogy of religion, natural and revealed', was put into the hands of youth in the univerſity, in my time, and I am told is ſtill much read. The ſerioufneſs of his ſpirit, and his deep concern for piety and virtue cannot be too much commended, and I profeſs myſelf to owe many obligations to him on theſe accounts. But as he takes a direct contrary road to what we have ſeen the ſcripture to point out, upon this ſubject, and through ignorance, charges the divine adminiſtration over us with not being ſo merciful and gracious as it really is, and fills the mind with dark ſuſpicions of the Divine Being himſelf being under ſome ſtrange conſtraints; I hold it of conſequence to point out to you his miſtakes, leſt his authority ſhould prejudice you againſt the truth.

P. 295. This author ſays, 'Revelation 'teacheth us, that the rules of divine go-'vernment are ſuch as not to admit of par-'don, immediately, and directly upon re-'pentance, or by the ſole efficacy of it. 'And a little after he adds, p. 296. Chriſt

'interpoſed

'interpoſed in ſuch a manner, as was neceſ-
'ſary and effectual to prevent that execution
'of juſtice upon ſinners, which God had
'appointed ſhould otherwiſe have been exe-
'cuted upon them; or in ſuch a manner,
'as to prevent that puniſhment from actu-
'ally following, which, according to the
'general laws of divine government, muſt
'have followed the ſins of the world, had it
'not been for ſuch an interpoſition.'

REMARKS.

1. It is allowed, that repentance will not prevent *preſent* ſufferings in conſequence of paſt ſins; it will not ſecure a man from the diſeaſes conſequent upon venereal exceſſes, for inſtance, or immoderate drinking. But what ground has our author to conclude, that it will not ſecure the man from future ſufferings. Surely the concluſion ought to have been quite the contrary; that ſince the ſufferings had accompliſhed the end deſigned by them, in making the man ceaſe from vice and become virtuous, therefore they would not continue in the next ſtate, be-

cauſe

cauſe there would be no occaſion for them. The analogy, or reſemblance in the two caſes is by this circumſtance quite altered.

2. What a dreadful picture does he draw of the moſt merciful God? According to him, HE is bound by certain laws and rules of his government, as the heathens held Jupiter ſubject to fate, ſo that juſtice *muſt* be executed upon ſinners; HE *cannot* pardon them, unleſs ſome powerful interpoſition be made to prevent his laws having their blow at the ſinner, and puniſhing him. How happy is it, that the ſcripture teaches a different doctrine! One paſſage, cited by our author, ſpeaks the very reverſe of what he ſuppoſes intended by it, and repreſents the whole plan of our ſalvation and Chriſt's ſufferings, as contrived and appointed by the heavenly Father, out of love to mankind. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his beloved ſon, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* John iii. 16. The ſufferings and death of Chriſt are never repreſented in ſcripture as the cauſe of God's ſhewing mercy to ſinners; but as the effect and reſult of his mercy and goodneſs;

goodneſs; a kind expedient, deviſed by him, to bring men from their ſins to holineſs, and an immortal life.

3. There is a radical miſtake in this writer, but which is by no means peculiar to him, in his language concerning Chriſt; flowing indeed from his own perſuaſion, but a very wrong perſuaſion concerning him, as if he were equal to the Almighty, or ſome great independent being, in his talking ſo continually of *his interpoſition*, *his interpoſing* to procure the pardon of ſins, or to make repentance effectual, by what he did and ſuffered for men. But Chriſt ſpeaks with more humility of himſelf, and of the part he took in the ſalvation of mankind; and the ſcriptures uniformly teach, that he was God's ſervant in all he did, and acted altogether in obedience to him, and with a view to recommend himſelf to his favour; and that the principal thing that made him acceptable to God, was his love to his brethren of mankind, in being willing to die to promote their virtue and everlaſting happineſs.

But it may be of uſe to you, to point out

the ſource of biſhop Butler's errors, and impoſition upon himſelf and others, in his miſrepreſentations of the Divine Being, and of his government over mankind.

At the end of his chapter on the importance of chriſtianity, p. 234. he is very earneſt to impreſs upon his readers, 'the obligation of ſearching the ſcriptures, in order 'to ſee, *what the ſcheme of revelation really* '*is*; *inſtead of determining beforehand, from* '*reaſon, what the ſcheme of it muſt be.*' But unfortunately, he himſelf has fallen into this very error, throughout the whole of this, and the four following chapters of his work: not indeed by determining before *from reaſon*, but by determining before *from the articles and liturgy of the church of England*, what the ſcheme of religion *muſt be*, without ever properly ſearching the ſcriptures to ſee what it *really is*.

Giving an account of chriſtianity, p. 220, he ſays; 'It contains a revelation of a particular diſpenſation of providence carrying on by the Son and Spirit of God, for the recovery and ſalvation of mankind, who are repreſented, in ſcripture, to be in a ſtate

a ſtate of ruin. That in conſequence of this revelation being made, we are commanded *to be baptized*, not only *in the name of the Father* but alſo *of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*: and other obligations of duty, unknown before, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghoſt, are revealed. Now the importance of theſe duties may be judged of, by obſerving, that they ariſe, not from poſitive command merely; but alſo from the offices, which appear from ſcripture, to belong to thoſe divine perſons in the goſpel-diſpenſation; or, from the relations, which, we are there informed, they ſtand in to us. By reaſon is revealed the relation, which God the Father ſtands in to us. Hence ariſes the obligation of duty we are under to him. In ſcripture are revealed the relations, which the Son and Holy Spirit ſtand in to us. Hence ariſe the obligations of duty, which we are under to them.'

He proceeds afterwards in the next page 222, to ſay; 'The eſſence of natural religion may be ſaid to conſiſt in religious regards to God *the Father Almighty*; and the eſſence of revealed

vealed religion, as 'diſtinguiſhed from natural, to conſiſt in religious regards to *the Son*, and to the *Holy Ghoſt*.' He then goes on to ſpeak of the diſtinct offices of theſe two divine perſons, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and of the religious regards, or inward worſhip due to each, being equally obligatory upon chriſtians as the worſhip of God the Father. And p. 225, dwells upon the fatal conſequences, and the judicial puniſhments that will enſue, particularly, from not worſhiping Jeſus Chriſt, as God.

REMARKS.

1. You obſerve that biſhop Butler, gives no proof from the ſcriptures, that the Son, and Holy Spirit are each of them divine perſons, or Gods, except what is to be drawn from the form of baptiſm, Matt. xxviii. 19; which is a very ſandy foundation for the ſuperſtruction of *two new Gods and objects of worſhip* upon it. For many indeed have ſhewn, and it will appear in the courſe of this work, that nothing of the kind can be built upon it; and that all that is ſignified by it is, that perſons were to be initiated into a religion,

which

which came from God, the Father of mankind, and was taught by Jeſus Chriſt his favoured and beloved creature and ſervant, and confirmed by his holy ſpirit, or the extraordinary divine power, which accompanied Jeſus and his apoſtles. Not to mention, that the apoſtles appear not to have laid any ſtreſs on this preciſe form of baptizing preſcribed in Matthew, ſince they uſually baptized in the name of Jeſus only.

2. After thus making *two new divine perſons, or Gods,* without any authority from the ſcriptures, the biſhop proceeds, as might be expected, of courſe, to talk of the duties to be paid to perſons in ſuch a ſituation, and ſtanding in ſuch a relation to us, the very ſame with that of God, the Father almighty; and pronounces that the ſame religious regards and inward worſhip are due to *them,* as to HIM.

This unqueſtionably is, and has been the doctrine and the practice of too many chriſtians, now and for many ages; but it was not ſo from the beginning; nor is it the doctrine of ſcripture, or the practice of holy men there recorded. For from the beginning to the end, the

bible knows only *one perſon*, who is the true and living God, nor ever ſpeaks of religious regards, or inward worſhip, to be paid to *any other perſon*. No one that I have heard or read of, has ever produced, from ſcripture, one example of prayer offered up to the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghoſt, as a divine perſon, or God. And the inſtances wherein worſhip has been *ſuppoſed* to be paid to Jeſus Chriſt, have been ſhewn, not to belong to him, or to conſiſt only in ſuch worſhip and reſpect, as is proper to be paid to a creature of ſuch excellence and moral worth.

3. You perceive to what a degree this learned man overlooks the ſcriptures, and impoſes upon himſelf: that he even makes the grand diſtinction and peculiarity of the goſpel, to conſiſt in the worſhip of theſe *two new divine perſons, and objects of religious worſhip*, whom no rational, unprejudiced reader, can find, either in the Old or New Teſtament. For one perſon, Jehovah, the Father, is there ſpoken of throughout as God alone; and no other beſide him is ever named, worſhiped, or recommended to be worſhiped,

ed, by Moſes and the prophets, or by Jeſus Chriſt.

4. Nay, he proceeds ſo far as to make a *new ſin*, unknown to the ſcriptures, like the pope of Rome's ſin of not faſting during the forty days of lent; and dwells upon the ſad conſequences and puniſhment that will follow hereafter, for not worſhiping Jeſus Chriſt as God. Surely he ought to have ſeen better to the eſtabliſhment of ſuch a doctrine on ſcripture-grounds, before he had dealt out judgments againſt thoſe who do not practice according to it. But he ſeems to have conſidered the bible in many reſpects, as a book, that was to be regulated and interpreted, according to the creeds and liturgy of the church of England.

5. You will obſerve the ſame prejudice to prevail throughout the biſhop's whole account of the chriſtian diſpenſation. Without examining into their real meaning, he brings a heap of paſſages of ſcripture, to prove Chriſt to have been a propitiatory ſacrifice; and intirely miſtaking the deſign of the epiſtle to the hebrews, he aſſerts the legal ſacrifices to be an alluſion to the great

and final atonement made by the blood of Chriſt, p. 298, &c. Whereas in fact, as you have ſeen, Chriſt was ſo far from *interpoſing in the redemption of the world*, as he ſpeaks, or offering himſelf as an *expiatory victim*, to make ſatisfaction to divine juſtice, or appeaſe the diſpleaſure of God, according to the heathen ideas with reſpect to their falſe Gods, a practice which biſhop Butler thinks to have been well founded, though ill directed; that the Divine Being, of his mere goodneſs, appointed him to die, that through the confirmation thereby given to the goſpel, he might be his inſtrument in bringing mankind to virtue and the happineſs he intended for them: to which our Lord dutifully ſubmitted, and with the moſt benevolent views for his fellow-creatures of mankind.

But then, Chriſt herein did no more than we and all his followers, are commanded to be ready to do, if called out to it. *Hereby perceive we love, becauſe he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*, 1 John iii. 16. He made not any ſatisfaction or atonement for ſin to God

any

any more than other martyrs and ſufferers for the truth of the goſpel; for the heavenly Father neither needed nor required any. It is a diſhonour and diſparagement to his all-perfect character and goodneſs, and contrary as you have ſeen to his own expreſs declarations by his prophets, and by Jeſus Chriſt laſt of all, to imagine, that he is not always ready, of his own accord, without any one's interpoſition, to receive his creatures to favour, upon their repentance alone.

To illuſtrate the more this moſt important ſubject, I would propoſe to you the probable reaſon, as it appears to me, why pious, thoughtful men, ſuch as biſhop Butler, Dr. Price, and others, have fallen into, and adhered ſo fixedly to this gloomy, unſcriptural doctrine, that repentance alone is not ſufficient to reſtore ſinful mortals to the favour of their Maker.

This I aſcribe to their not keeping ſtrictly to the doctrine of ſcripture concerning the divine unity and the proper humanity of Chriſt,

Chriſt, there delivered, in the cleareſt characters, to all who come not to the reading of it, under a rooted and fixed contrary perſuaſion.

For, having taken up the notion, which was firſt brought in by heathen philoſophers, who embraced the goſpel; *i. e.* that Jeſus Chriſt is God, or the greateſt and moſt antient of beings, next to him; and finding the buſineſs and employment, however honourable, of bringing men off from their ſins, and making them virtuous and good, not a proper call for ſuch a Being as God, or one next to him, to deſcend for upon earth and to ſuffer and die; ſince this might as well or better be done by a man like themſelves, with proper authority from God, and exemplifying his doctrine in his own life and practice, which would be more to their level, and affect men the more: they therefore had recourſe to, and adopted that other heathen notion, of their falſe gods being angry with men for their ſins and neglect of them, and needing to be appeaſed with offerings and victims: and ſetting imagination to work, and miſconſtruing and miſapplying the figurative,

rative, ſacrifical, language of the New Teſtament, and particularly of the apoſtle Paul, as if it was to be taken literally, though a mere alluſion to the prevailing cuſtoms and worſhip, they *ſuppoſed* that there was ſome bar and obſtacle in heaven to be removed, ſome myſterious demand of divine juſtice to be ſatisfied, before ſin could be forgiven; that there was a ranſom or debt to be diſcharged, which no mortal could pay; and that it was neceſſary in order to this, that God himſelf ſhould ſuffer and die, or ſome great being almoſt equal to him, or mankind muſt be puniſhed, or periſh for ever.

So long as men are perſuaded, that there is ſuch an angry power above them, who is ſo inexorable and ſevere in his government, they can ſeldom think well of the world they live in, or that their Maker is ſo good as he really is.

Of this you ſee the moſt manifeſt effects in the deſcription which biſhop Butler gives of man's preſent ſtate; which he introduces with a ſuppoſition, the thought of which makes one tremble; but for which, happily, what-

whatever he imagined, there is no real foundation.

'Were we to ſuppoſe, ſays he, p. 297. 'the conſtitution of things to be ſuch, as 'that the whole creation muſt have periſh-'ed, had it not been for *ſomewhat*, which 'God had appointed ſhould be, in order to 'prevent that ruin: even this ſuppoſition 'would not be inconſiſtent, in any degree, 'with the moſt abſolutely perfect goodneſs. 'But ſtill it may be thought, that this whole 'manner of treating the ſubject before us, 'ſuppoſes mankind to be naturally in a very 'ſtrange ſtate. And truly ſo it does. But 'it is not chriſtianity, which has put us in-'to this ſtate. Whoever will conſider the 'manifold miſeries, and the extreme wick-'edneſs of the world: that the beſt have 'very great wrongneſſes within themſelves, 'which they complain of, and endeavour 'to amend; but that the generality grow 'more profligate and corrupt with age: that 'heathen moraliſts thought the preſent ſtate 'to be a ſtate of puniſhment: and, what 'might be added, that the earth our habi-'tation has the appearances of being a ruin:

who-

'whoever, I ſay, will conſider all theſe, 'and ſome other obvious things, will think 'he has little reaſon to object againſt the 'ſcripture-account, that mankind is in a 'ſtate of degradation." Analogy, &c. p. 297.

Surely this is an exhibition of the dark ſide of things, giving a partial and untrue account of our preſent ſtate. For if every thing wore the melancholy hue, this worthy man gives it, many would ſay, the ſooner a man were out of the ſyſtem the better. But it is not the fact; nor does Moſes in his account of the fall countenance him in it.

That divine lawgiver indeed gives a deſcription of our firſt parents' tranſgreſſion, and of the fatal conſequences of it, like a wiſe and good man, under ſuch images, as were ſuited to the groſs conceptions of men in that infancy of the world, and ſuch as he believed might beſt deter them in future from diſobeying the commands of their creator, upon whoſe favour their being and happineſs depended. But what he makes to be ſaid to Adam, *curſed is the ground for thy ſake; in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life*, ſeems a circumſtance

ſtance peculiar to our firſt progenitor, who would be ſtung with remorſe all his life for the part he had acted. We are not thence to conclude, as biſhop Butler ſeems to do, that all his poſterity were to live all their days in miſery.

What Adam's ſtate was before the fall, we have no grounds on which to build any thing certain. We have no reaſon however to believe, that it was an indolent and inactive one, ſince the divine command then was, to *repleniſh* and *ſubdue* the earth; which neceſſarily ſuppoſed they were to labour and toil. But labour is not miſery, but the contrary. And, notwithſtanding this threat, Moſes himſelf promiſes all manner of earthly enjoyments to his countrymen, if they ſerved and obeyed almighty God. And no nation, I believe, ever was, or could deſire to be happier than they were, at ſuch periods when they obſerved his laws.

Far, very far alſo is it from being a miſerable world, that we *now* live in, but very much the contrary; nor, I apprehend, has there ever been any the leaſt reaſon to call it ſo in general, however ſome individuals

viduals may have ſuffered much in it. But it is a misfortune to write of things from theory, to form a judgment of all mankind from temporary or local circumſtances, from looking only into hoſpitals, dungeons, or upon the objects that preſent themſelves to the eyes in the ſtreets of great cities; and not attending to the whole of the caſe, and counting the millions unſeen that are employed and happy. It ſhould be taken alſo into the account, that pain and ſuffering are ſalutary and uſeful, tending to preſerve health and life, and to rectify the moral frame, and lead to virtue: and virtue is happineſs here and hereafter.

Should there be found any, whoſe ſufferings far outweigh their enjoyments; you muſt not therefore arraign the goodneſs of their creator, or cenſure his government; but conſider, that all does not end here. Such inequalities may be rectified hereafter. Theſe caſes however are very few; as there are compenſations found in all conditions, which are unknown to the byſtander and ſpectator. We can be certain of no one's caſe but our own. And yet even here, we

are

are far from being fair calculators: for with ourſelves, a very ſhortlived fit of pain will make whole years of pleaſure forgotten.

For my own part, I am bound to ſay, that my condition has been moſt happy, from the beginning of my exiſtence to the preſent day. Happily preſerved from great calamities, I have not been exempt from hardſhips, reverſes, and ſickneſſes; but the kind hand of providence has been diſcernible in them all, leading to good by them. I have moſt particularly cauſe to ſpeak well of thoſe of my fellow-beings, whom I have been acquainted with, or among whom my lot has been caſt, and I would deſire no better company for ever, than thoſe I have known, and loved, and eſteemed, and heard, and read of; eſpecially, when diveſted more of all ſelfiſhneſs, and *terrene concretions*, as Edward Search calls them, which we expect, nay rather are perſuaded, will take place in our future progreſſive ſtate. Indeed was there to be no ſuch ſtate, and all was to end here, though ſo dark and abrupt a concluſion of the fair promiſing ſcene, is not credible, and would be wholly unaccountable,

countable, I muſt, for my part, take my leave, and depart, a well ſatisfied gueſt, *ſatur conviva recederem*; thankful that I had paſſed ſo many happy days, and lived, and ſeen, and experienced ſo much of the goodneſs of my creator, and been favoured with the knowlege of ſo many amiable and valuable characters among my ſpecies, though concerned to take a farewell for ever of the one and the other, and to know nothing any more.

Nor is the wickedneſs of the world, however much to be lamented, ſo extreme, as biſhop Butler repreſents it, in his gloomy picture. Was it ſuch in fact, much of the blame, I fear, would fall, where leaſt of all he would have wiſhed it, on the religion of Jeſus; and it might have been turned into a ſhrewd argument againſt its divine origin, which would have had great weight with many minds, *viz.* that it has been now near two thouſand years in the world, and ſo little good done by it.

But it is a groundleſs, though wholly unintentional aſperſion of divine providence

and the goſpel, the effect of a narrow mind, bound down to a religious ſyſtem, which would not ſuffer this good man to look about him, and ſee things as they really are, either in the word, or the works of the great creator.

All theſe melancholy ſurmiſes you will ſee diſſipated in a book that much deſerves your attention, for the large variety of curious and uſeful matter which it contains; but particularly for ſhewing, that religion and ſcience have been in a ſtate of progreſſive improvement from the beginning of things: which will contribute to put you in good humour with the world you live in, and make you love and adore its benign author and governor, and his wiſe and kind adminiſtration over you, and over all.

The book is intitled, 'Conſiderations on 'the theory of religion,' &c. by Edmund, Lord Bp. of Carliſle, the 7th edition, 1784. The author's character is finely touched by an able but no flattering hand, and I ſhall not digreſs from my purpoſe in holding it up to you.

"A long

" A long life, (ſays Mr. Archdeacon
' Paley, in the dedication of his Principles
' of moral and political philoſophy to the
' Bp. of Carliſle,) ſpent in the moſt inter-
' eſting of all human purſuits, the inveſtiga-
' tion of moral and religious truth, in con-
' ſtant and unwearied endeavours to advance
' the diſcovery, communication, and ſucceſs
' of both; a life ſo occupied, and arrived at
' that period which renders every life vener-
' able, commands reſpect by a title, which
' no virtuous mind will diſpute, which no
' mind ſenſible of the importance of theſe
' ſtudies to the ſupreme concernments of
' mankind will not rejoice to ſee acknow-
' leged. Whatever difference, or whatever
' oppoſition, ſome, who peruſe your lord-
' ſhip's writings, may perceive between their
' concluſions and your own, the good and
' wiſe of all perſuaſions will revere that in-
' duſtry, which has for its object the illuſ-
' tration or defence of our common chriſtia-
' nity. Your lordſhip's reſearches have never
' loſt ſight of one purpoſe, namely, to re-
' cover the ſimplicity of the goſpel from

'beneath that load of unauthorized addi-
'tions, which the ignorance of ſome ages,
'and the learning of others, the ſuperſti-
'tion of weak and the craft of deſigning
'men, have (unhappily for its intereſt)
'heaped upon it. And this purpoſe, I am
'convinced, was dictated by the pureſt mo-
'tive; by a firm, and, I think, a juſt opi-
'nion, *that whatever renders religion more*
'*rational, renders it more credible*; *that he,*
'*who, by a diligent and faithful examination*
'*of the original records, diſmiſſes from the*
'*ſyſtem one article, which contradicts the ap-*
'*prehenſion, the experience, or the reaſoning*
'*of mankind, does more towards recommending*
'*the belief, and, with the belief, the influence*
'*of chriſtianity, to the underſtandings and con-*
'*ſciences of ſerious inquirers, and through*
'*them to univerſal reception and authority,*
'*than can be effected by a thouſand contenders*
'*for creeds and ordinances of human eſtabliſh-*
'*ment.*'

Another inſtance brought by biſhop Butler of the conſequence of the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, is 'that the earth we live in 'has the appearance of being a ruin.'

Did

Did you not ſee whence it ariſes, you would wonder that ſuch a thought would enter into the mind of this pious and learned man; when the beauties of nature have been the theme of ſerious obſervers, and conſtant ſong of poets, through all ages; ſuch a canopy, ſo magnificently adorned, ſpread over our heads, by day and by night: each part of the globe moſt plentifully ſupplied for the accommodation of its various inhabitants, reptiles, beaſts, fiſhes, flies, fowls, up to man, with *(o)* goodneſs compleat as well as wiſdom. Every thing contrived, with an aſtoniſhing profuſion, moſt grateful and ſalutary to the ſenſes; and all made welcome to the feaſt, ſo it be partaken of with moderation, and thankſgiving to the magnificent donor.

What if you are forced to ſevere labour to procure theſe conveniences and delights?

(o) See pſalm cxlv, cxlvii, cxlviii, cl. It would ſeem hence as if the Iſraelites lived in a happier world, and under a better and more merciful God, than we chriſtians, if we compare theſe ſongs of holy joy in praiſe of the great creator, with the ſorrowful ideas which biſhop Butler would inculcate.

You are the happier for it. You could not be happy without it. *Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening*; is among the ſubjects of praiſe to the beneficent creator, in a hymn, famous for that admirable ſenſe and ſublime ſimplicity, which diſtinguiſh the ſacred penmen. Inſtead of a ruin then, this earth is a palace, moſt nobly and amply furniſhed, into which our maker has put us, and but too beautiful and good for creatures juſt crept into exiſtence, ſave only that it ſerves to diſplay his ſuperlative goodneſs, and to raiſe our expectations of what he has in reſerve for us, in our more improved ſtate, in a future world, whereever it is to be.

How much biſhop Butler's views of nature were darkened, and his mind warped and hurt by the unbenevolent religious ſyſtem he had embraced, you will gather from a remark which he makes, in his Analogy, &c. p. 146. 'Of the numerous ſeeds, ſays he, 'of vegetables, and bodies of animals, which 'are adapted, and put in the way to improve 'to ſuch a point, and ſtate of natural matu-

'rity

'rity and perfection, we do not ſee perhaps 'that one in a million actually does. For 'the greateſt part of them decay before they 'are improved to it; and appear to be abſo-'lutely deſtroyed. Yet no one, who does 'not deny all final cauſes, will deny, that 'thoſe ſeeds and bodies, which do attain to 'that point of maturity and perfection, an-'ſwer the end for which they were really 'deſigned by nature; and therefore that na-'ture deſigned them for ſuch perfection. 'And I cannot forbear adding, though it is 'not to the preſent purpoſe, that the ap-'pearance of ſuch an amazing waſte in na-'ture, with reſpect to theſe ſeeds and bodies, 'by foreign cauſes, is to us as unaccounta-'ble, as what is much more terrible, the 'preſent and future ruin of ſo many moral 'agents by themſelves, *i. e.* by vice.'

You would here reply, that thoſe millions of millions of inſects, that live but a day, or an hour, are happy during their exiſtence, and an argument of the goodneſs that gave it to them; and the infinite number of ſeeds, which are ſcattered far and wide and ſeem to

come to nothing, ſhew a laviſh generous profuſion that delights us. But it muſt have been a moſt melancholy turn of mind, as well as a very falſe way of reaſoning, that could lead a man hence to infer, that the like waſte and utter loſs may take place in the human ſpecies. Where is the analogy or reſemblance, to countenance the frightful concluſion? The one, a being, rational, and capable of virtuous improvement for ever, and therefore its extinction a real loſs in the creation: the others, not made for any farther exiſtence, or the ſubjects of any improvement. But this is only one, among many inſtances, wherein this author has been miſled by *fancying* analogies and reſemblances between God's natural moral government over us, and that part of it which he has thought fitting to reveal to us by Jeſus Chriſt.

A more accurate and liberal inquiry into the ſcriptures, and a juſter philoſophy, would have given this good man more pleaſing views of the world he lived in, and of the gracious being who is at the head of the univerſe; of his government over us,

and

and our expectations from him. He would have ſeen HIM, *one perſon*, *one* in the moſt abſolute poſſible ſenſe of the word, *no unity like his*, as the jews ſpeak, and perfectly good; who has declared, that he deſires the happineſs of all his rational creatures, ſo that he could have had no other view than this in bringing us into life; and who, or what ſhall be able to diſappoint the deſires and defeat the deſigns of infinite goodneſs, and power commenſurate to it?

Without holineſs indeed *no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. Rational agents muſt be exerciſed and formed to goodneſs by paſſing through trials and difficulties; at leaſt, we are made acquainted with no other way or method, by which they may be improved, and become laſtingly happy. And if they have defiled their natures, and contracted evil habits, they muſt, by proper diſcipline, be purified and changed. They muſt ſuffer, if not virtuous, and till they become virtuous: for this can only bring durable happineſs.

That

That *all men will finally be brought to happineſs*, though heavy will be the future ſufferings of thoſe who have neglected and refuſed the means of it in the preſent ſtate, is not a doctrine of to-day. It is well known that the learned Origen, a confeſſor for the truth, and a man of incomparable virtue, extended the divine compaſſion to devils, as well as to wicked men: ſuch was his humanity, and ſo high did he rate, and eſteem the goodneſs of God. But happily, we find his plea for the former unneceſſary, ſince neither ſcripture nor reaſon countenance the exiſtence of a powerful evil being, an utter enemy to God and all goodneſs, or of any number of ſuch beings.

This ſentiment, ſo worthy of the Divine Being, has been taken up in our own time, by two perſons of the firſt rank in ſcience and virtue: for I do not diſparage Dr. Hartley, by putting on a level with him, the man, from the peruſal of whoſe works, Dr. Horne ſeeks to divert and diſcourage

you

you. It has alſo been maintained, in America, by an excellent perſon lately deceaſed, *(p)*, and is ſaid to gain ground on that continent.

(p) "The myſtery hid from ages and generations, made manifeſt by the goſpel-revelation: or, the ſalvation of all men, the grand thing aimed at in the ſcheme of God, as opened in the New Teſtament-writings, and intruſted with Jeſus Chriſt to bring into effect: By one who wiſhes well to the whole human race." (the late Rev. Dr. Chauncy of Boſton, in New England; who finiſhed his pious, virtuous, and uſeful courſe, Feb. 1787, aged 83.) printed for Dilly, 1784. You will be pleaſed with the force and ſimplicity of the following argument from reaſon on the ſubject he eſpouſes.

'A very great part of thoſe, who will be miſerable in the 'other world, were not, that we know of, INCURABLY ſin-'ful in *this*. Multitudes are taken off, before they had op-'portunity to make themſelves *hardened*, *abandoned* ſinners: 'and, as far as we are able to judge, had they been con-'tinued in life, they might have been formed to a virtuous 'temper of mind by a ſuitable mixture of *correction*, *inſtruc-'tion*, and the like. And can it be ſuppoſed, with reſpect 'to ſuch, that an infinitely benevolent God, without *any* 'other trial in order to effect their reformation, will con-'ſign them over to *endleſs and irreverſible torment?* Would 'this be to conduct himſelf towards them like a *Father?* 'Let the heart of *a father on earth* ſpeak upon this occa-'ſion. Nay, it does not appear, that *any ſinners* are ſo 'INCORRIGIBLE in wickedneſs, as to be beyond recovery,

'by

continent. One bleſſed effect muſt follow, wherever it is cordially entertained, that it will particuiarly contribute to extinguiſh all religious heats and animoſities upon the account of differences in opinion, which have created ſo much diſturbance in the world at all times. For how ſhall I deſpiſe or hate, or evil-intreat one, whom hereafter I ſhall embrace as a brother, and ſhall behold, equally fixed in virtue and happineſs, and no leſs in the divine favour than myſelf?

You will be pleaſed with the following act of devotion, at the end of a treatiſe upon this ſubject, by an author *(q)* of the laſt century. The phraſe and diction in ſome parts

'by ſtill further methods, within the reach of *infinite wiſ-*
'*dom*. And if the infinitely wiſe God can, in any wiſe
'methods, recover them, even in *any other ſtate of trial*,
'may we not argue, from his *infinite benevolence*, that he
'will? And is it not far more reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that
'the miſeries of the *other world* are a *proper diſcipline* in order
'to accompliſh this *end*, than that they ſhould be *final* and
'*vindictive* only?' p. 321, 322.

(q) 'The reſtoration of all things: or a vindication of the goodneſs and grace of God, to be manifeſted at laſt in the recovery of his whole creation out of their fall, by Jeremiah White. 1712.'

parts, you will excuſe, as ſavouring of the divinity of the times he lived in; but his ſentiments are noble and divine. He thus uſhers it in. 'I conclude what I have ſaid from the ſcripture, and on this ſubject, with this moſt humble addreſs to God.'

The author's prayer.

Pardon me, o my God, if in the contemplation and experience of thy ſuperabounding grace to myſelf, I have been tranſported in my repreſentation of thee beyond thy allowance. I think it impoſſible to exceed, what I am admiring that grace of thine, which is the higheſt, the ſweeteſt, the moſt exalted name of that love, which is THYSELF, *and the eternal ſpring of all love, and lovelineſs.*

I preſume not to pry into the methods of thy love, and thy ſeaſons for the full manifeſtation of it. How far thy thoughts and ways, which are thy infinite wiſdom, do tranſcend, I know not: but ſure I am, they cannot fall ſhort of the limited perfections of thy creatures. Thou haſt in thy own firſt make, given me a nature all diſpoſed to love. Thou haſt, by thy grace, heightened

heightened and enlarged that love to all thy off-spring, to every thing that bears any image or ſtamp of thyſelf upon it. I could not, as I ought to do, love thee, if I did not love thee, wherever I find thee. Thou haſt commanded me and all thine, to overcome all the evil of this lower world with good. No evil, no injury I have met with in this unkind world, for thy ſake, or upon any other account whatſoever, hath yet excceded my love and forgiveneſs. Yea, thou haſt made it one of my higheſt pleaſures to love and ſerve enemies. Can I then think any evil in any of thy creatures can overſet thy goodneſs? Thou art the higheſt example to them of all the goodneſs thou requireſt us to ſhew to one another. I muſt believe then, thy grace will ſooner or later ſuperabound, wherever ſin hath moſt abounded; unleſs I can think, that a little drop of being, and but one remove from nothing, can excel in goodneſs that ocean of goodneſs, which hath neither ſhore, bottom, nor ſurface.

Thou art goodneſs itſelf, in the abſtract, in its firſt ſpring, in its ſupreme and univerſal form and ſpirit. We muſt believe thee to be infinitely good, to be good without any meaſure

or

or bound, to be good beyond all expreſſion and conception of all creatures, of men, and angels; or we muſt give over thinking thee to be at all. All the goodneſs which is every where to be found, ſcattered among the creatures, is ſent forth from thee, the fountain, the ſea of all goodneſs. Into this ſea of all goodneſs, I deliver myſelf, and all my fellow-creatures. Thou art love, and canſt no more ceaſe to be ſo, than to be thyſelf. Take thy own methods with us, and ſubmit us to them. Well may we ſo do, in an aſſurance that the beginning, the way, the end of all, is love.

To the inexhauſtible fountain of all grace and goodneſs, from all his creatures, be aſcribed all glory and praiſes for ever and ever. Amen. Hallelujah.

SECTION XIII.

Dr. Prieſtley's *aſſertion that men have no ſouls diſtinct from their bodies, concerns not at all our living again in another world.* Dr. Horne *miſtaken*

miſtaken in his proof from ſcripture relating to it. The popular language there concerning it, how to be underſtood. Luther's *ſentiment. The doctrine revived by biſhop* Law; *defended by Archdeacon* Blackburne; *agreeable to true philoſophy and the ſcriptures. How eaſy to retaliate* Dr. Horne's *treatment of* Dr. Prieſtley.

THERE remains one accuſation more of Dr. Prieſtley to be conſidered, and we ſhall take leave of Dr. Horne, in his *undergraduate*-character.

A great outcry is made by him, at Dr. Prieſtley's ſentiment concerning the compoſition of man: becauſe he aſſerts, that we conſiſt not of a body of matter, and a ſoul that is immaterial, an inhabitant of the body, that takes its flight into ſome other regions when we die; but that the whole man is of one uniform compoſition and material, and dies together.

It is a popular objection, that man has no ſoul, and to the unthinking many carries an idea with it, that all is over with us when we leave

leave the world; a circumſtance, which Dr. Horne is not unmindful to dwell upon.

Of what materials we are formed, is of no conſequence, if the conſcious living powers, whereby we are capable of knowlege, and of natural and moral improvements, remain after death. And this none more warmly aſſerts, or more ſolidly proves, than Dr. Prieſtley. Candour then ſhould have forbidden the inſinuation, and the encouragement of ſuch a report, againſt one, who is a moſt firm believer of a future ſtate, and who profeſſes his chief dependence for it to reſt upon the goſpel: for which he has undergone much obloquy and calumny, from another claſs of men.

'There is a book of yours, ſays this gen-
'tleman, (ſpeaking for you as well as him-
'ſelf, to Dr. Prieſtley), in which, as you
'tell us, you have made it as evident as any
'thing of this nature can be, that the po-
'pular doctrine of *a ſoul* has no foundation
'in reaſon or the ſcriptures, but was bor-
'rowed from the heathen philoſophy. I,
'continues Dr. Horne, have been differently

'inſtructed, Sir, by a teacher, whoſe au-
'thority is deciſive with ME. *Fear not them*
'*which kill the body, but are not able to kill*
'*the ſoul: but rather fear him, which is able*
'*to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell.* Matt.
x. 28. *(r)*.

This

(r) You will find Dr. Horne, triumphing without cauſe, from a like miſtake of his own in another part of his undergraduate-letter, p. 35. 'Mr. Lindſey,' ſays he, 'has de-
'creed that prayer and thankſgiving ſhall not be directed
'to Chriſt, and therefore he is to be ſtripped of all his of-
'fices, which may ſeem in any way or degree to claim
'them. It is determined that "the prieſthood is no real
"part of his character, nor needs it to be attended to by his
"followers." In another place, to avoid the ſame con-
'cluſion from the declaration, *All power is given to me*
'*in heaven and earth, and lo, I am with you always even to*
'*the end of the world:* the *power* is explained to be that of
'working miracles for the firſt propagation of the goſpel;
'*heaven and earth* are the nations among whom it was pro-
'pagated; and by *the end of the world*, we are to under-
'ſtand 40 years, being the termination of the jewiſh polity,
'and the period of the apoſtles' lives and miniſtry; beyond
'which miraculous gifts were not communicated; Chriſt's
'miſſion to communicate them, if I do not miſtake Mr.
'Lindſey's meaning, being at an end.'

I have

This is one proof, among many, of Dr. Horne's citing the ſcriptures without due

I have no doubt but that I ſhall be able to convince you, in the courſe of this work, that this interpretation of Matt. xxviii. 20, is juſt and ſcriptural, though ſo diſliked by Dr. Horne. And with reſpect to the laſt clauſe, the limitation of Chriſt's power here ſpoken of, ſo good a judge as the late biſhop Pearce, has the following note upon the place. 'To *the end of the world*, ſhould rather be, *to the end of the* 'age; i. e. the end of the jewiſh age. See com. on ch. 'xxiv. 3. This ſeems to limit the promiſe of ſuch aſſiſ-'tance to that period of time.'

Dr. Horne concludes with remarking, p. 37. 'We 'may have the comfort to reflect, upon the whole of Mr. 'Lindſey's reaſonings, that Chriſt is no longer with *us*, 'no longer intereſts himſelf in *our* concerns, nor even 'knows what *we* are doing. And all this, leſt we ſhould 'be guilty of the heinous crime of *praying* to him."

To this I would reply; How far Chriſt is now acquainted with what his followers and the reſt of mankind are doing, upon this globe of ours, we are intirely in the dark, as much as we are concerning the great prophet Elijah's knowlege of human affairs. I am not conſcious of having charged any one with being criminal in praying to Jeſus Chriſt. But if he be not God almighty, but a creature, which laſt I believe him to be, Dr. Horne himſelf draws this concluſion for me, *viz.* that the *whole chriſtian church has been guilty of idolatry, from the very days of the apoſtles.*

conſideration. For our Saviour is very far, in this place, from teaching a contrary doctrine to that of Dr. Prieſtley, concerning the thinking part of man, that it is diſtinct from and independent of the body, that he really ſays nothing at all about it. For the words of the original ſhould be rendered, *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill* the life : *but rather fear him, who is able to deſtroy both body and* life *in hell.*

If he had looked to *ver.* 39. *He that findeth his life, ſhall loſe it : and he that loſeth his life for my ſake ſhall find it*; he would have perceived that our engliſh tranſlators render the ſame word, ψυχη, that is here uſed, not *ſoul,* but *life*, as it would not have been very intelligible to ſay, *he that findeth his* ſoul, *ſhall loſe it.* And ſo in conſiſtency it ought to have been rendered here, *viz.* *Fear*

apoſtles. Sermon at Canterbury, before the Archbiſhop, p. 3. In which nevertheleſs I think him ſomewhat miſtaken, as the worſhip of Chriſt as God, did not begin ſo ſoon; though the foundation for it was laid in the apoſtle John's days, by ſome heathen converts, whom he ſeverely reproves in his epiſtles.

Fear not them which kill the body, i. e. the preſent life, Luke xii. 4, 5. *but are not able to kill the life*, i. e. extinguiſh it intirely, *kill* the future *life: but rather fear him, who is able to deſtroy both body and life in hell*; *i. e.* can deſtroy both the preſent and future life. In like manner, Luke xii. 19. 20. *ſoul* ſhould properly be tranſlated *life*.

Our Lord here conſiders life as a thing ſuperadded to the body, and of which it was deprived at death. And he appears to have taken his ideas of it from the moſaic account of the creation, Gen. ii. 7; that *the* LORD *God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life*. This was the general ſentiment of the people of the jews, in all periods, as we find from their hiſtory in the bible. Hence you ſee Martha, the ſiſter of Lazarus, in her dialogue with Chriſt concerning her dead brother, ſpeaking of him as intirely dead, without life; and that if he was to live again, it would be through a reſurrection, by his life being reſtored again to the body, at the laſt day. John xi. 21—24.

Whether a man has ſuch a ſoul or not, as Dr. Horne condemns Dr. Prieſtley for re-

jecting, is of no conſequence, if he has all the conſcious thinking powers and faculties denoted by it, and will have them reſtored to him at the reſurrection at the laſt day; and thereby become the ſubject of the divine approbation, or the contrary, for his behaviour, in the preſent ſtate.

And however ſome may be diſturbed at the thought of their whole frame, ſoul and body, being diſſolved, and dying together, our living again afterwards will not at all be affected by it. For *that*, moſt aſſuredly, will not depend on the mere materials of our compoſition, but on the will of the gracious power that put them together.

And it is obſervable, that in the ſcriptures, with reſpect to our living again hereafter, there is no ſtreſs laid on our original make and conſtitution, the immateriality, or natural immortality of the ſuppoſed thinking part within us, and the like: but our future life is deſcribed as reſting ſolely on a reſurrection from the dead, built upon the promiſes of God, and aſcertained to us by the reſurrection of Chriſt, our elder brother.

It

It may diminiſh the prejudices of ſome perſons againſt Dr. Prieſtley, on account of his opinion on this point, that the famous Luther entertained the ſentiment of *the ſleep of the ſoul* till the reſurrection, which is very near akin to the *having no ſoul at all.* We are made acquainted with a pleaſing circumſtance relating to this, by his hiſtorian, Seckendorf, in a reflection made by that reformer, upon being told of the ſudden death of his friend, a pious and excellent prince, John elector of Saxony; who died of an apoplexy, immediately upon his returning from the chace *(s)*. 'God, ſaid Luther, 'took him away without pain, like a child 'that gently and without apprehenſion 'breathes its laſt. At the reſurrection at 'the laſt day, it will ſeem to him, as if he

(s) Deus, ait, illi evenire fecit, quod pueris, qui abſque cura naſcuntur, vivunt et exſpirant: cum reſurrecturus eſt in die noviſſimo, putabit ſe ex ſaltu Lochavienſi, ubi venabatur, venire. Seckendorf. Hiſt. Luth. l. iii. p. 30. See an hiſtorical view of the controverſy concerning the intermediate ſtate, &c. p. 349, 350. By Archdeacon Blackburne, 1772. In which the reader will find amuſement and inſtruction upon this curious ſubject, ſuch as is no where elſe to be met with.

'was juſt come from the foreſt, where he 'was hunting.'

Did not friendſhip, affection, and high eſteem, preſerve, and will long preſerve fragrant and freſh, the memory of the truly learned Archdeacon of Cleveland, Mr. Blackburne, the ſubject, and the name of Luther would call *(t)* to mind this his great admirer, and moſt able defender of the doctrine of the ſleep of the ſoul; who in Auguſt, 1787, at the age of 82, with his judgment, and powers of body and mind in extraordinary

(t) He had been for a long time laying in various materials from books, and other ſources, and had attended much to the works of this reformer, with a view to have given his life in engliſh; in which he had made ſome ſmall beginnings. But he was diverted from it at firſt by another work; and afterwards, by the ſhock he received from the loſs of his ſecond ſon, Dr. Thomas Blackburne, who was cut off by a fever in his 31ſt year, and the more, as he depended upon him to complete whatever he might leave imperfect: to which indeed he was fully equal, being a ſcholar, of fine parts, improved by claſſical and all other knowlege, beſides his eminence in his profeſſion. He was alſo of the ſoundeſt principles, civil and religious, and his manners open, and diſpoſitions amiable and generous as his perſon was manly, and pleaſing:

Chariſſimam animam
His ſaltem accumulem donis.

traordinary vigour, his eyeſight only much impaired, though not wholly gone, expired, without a ſigh or groan, in his ſleep, as he ſat in his chair, ſoon after having chearfully told thoſe about him, that he ſhould compoſe himſelf to reſt.

And exactly one week after him, in his 85th year, his antient friend, ſchool-fellow, and member of the ſame univerſity, Dr. Law, biſhop of Carliſle, finiſhed his mortal courſe, and fell aſleep, more enfeebled in body for one or two years, but with the ſame gentle, pious, liberal and benevolent ſpirit he had always poſſeſſed, and with the moſt aſſured, chearful hope of awaking again to an immortal life, on the morning of the reſurrection. He was acquainted with, and always expreſſed a very high eſteem for Dr. Prieſtley, and was intirely with him in his ſentiments concerning the ſoul; and was alſo the reviver, in our times, of the opinion, that there is no intermediate ſtate between death and the reſurrection; but that the two moments of our death and reſtoration to life at the laſt day, will be connected together; which ſeems now very generally to prevail among thoſe

thoſe who conſult the ſcriptures concerning a point, which *they* only can determine. This worthy prelate had the courage to propoſe the queſtion of *the ſleep of the ſoul*, to be defended by him for his degree of doctor in divinity, in the univerſity of Cambridge, and made his *theſis* upon it. In the margin you will *(u)* ſee ſome ſmall account of this worthy perſon, as a head of a college; and one or two anecdotes of what happened to him, for the freedom of his ſentiments, in his exerciſe for his doctor's degree; taken from eccleſiaſtical memorials of the times, by a public-ſpirited capable obſerver, ſome years ſince deceaſed, deſtined by their author not to ſee the light of 30 years from the time of his death. But this that relates to biſhop Law, much to his honour, a part of which only I give you, hath, I know not how, tranſpired before the time.

I can-

(u) 'I heard him, with great pleaſure perform his exer-
'ciſe for his doctor's degree, at the public ſchools in Cam-
'bridge, January, 1748-9. Dr. Parne, the moderator *pro*
'*tempore*, was his opponent.—One great doctor, head of a
'great college, refuſed to ſign his teſtimonial; ſaying, that
'he did not like either his perſon or his doctrine. Yet after-
'wards

I cannot do better than cloſe this head, with what Dr. Prieſtley himſelf ſays upon the ſubject, after having mentioned the inſuperable difficulties attending the popular notion

'wards he was reconciled, when Law became head of St. 'Peter's college, and made him frequent viſits, &c. Arch-'biſhop Potter, he told me, diſliked his doctrine about in-'ſpiration and reproved him. Warburton told him, he diſ-'ſparaged the church, by which he got his bread. Arch-'biſhop Herring, on hearing of his *theſis* at Cambridge, 'ſaid to him;' "I neither juſtify, nor condemn you. If "your doctrine be right, I am no loſer; if wrong, I am "but as I was: I am in the hands of a juſt and merciful "God, to whom I wholly commit myſelf. I believe his "goſpel, and am perſuaded you do ſo as much as I, though "we may have different ſentiments about ſome particulars. "We ſhall both of us, I hope, meet in heaven." 'When 'in going his rounds to the heads of houſes, preſently after 'his keeping this act, he came to Dr. Caſtle, the worthy 'maſter of Corpus Chriſti college, he ſaid to him, in his 'blunt and honeſt manner,' "I know that this is a ſocinian "tenet; but I believe you deſerve your degree, and will "readily ſign your teſtimonial."

'On Sundays, in the afternoon, he inſtructed the young 'men of his college, deſigned for orders, in the original 'language, ſenſe, and deſign of the New Teſtament, and 'of the Old, in the hebrew, &c. and has nothing more at 'heart than teaching the chriſtian religion in its native 'purity and ſimplicity; of which he was a compleat maſter.'

Gentleman's magazine for Auguſt, 1787. p. 745.

notion of a ſoul, diſtinct from the body, and dwelling in it.

'How eaſy is it, ſays he, to get rid of all 'the embaraſſment attending the doctrine 'of a ſoul, in every view of it, by admit-'ting, agreeably to all the phenomena, that 'the power of thinking belongs to the *brain* 'of a man, as that of walking to his feet, or 'that of ſpeaking to his tongue; that, 'therefore, man, who is *one being*, is com-'poſed of *one kind of ſubſtance*, made of *the 'duſt of the earth*; that when he dies, he, 'of courſe, ceaſes to think; but when his 'ſleeping duſt ſhall be reanimated at the 'reſurrection, his power of thinking, and 'his conſciouſneſs will be reſtored to him.

'This ſyſtem gives a real value to the 'doctrine of *a reſurrection from the dead*, 'which is peculiar to revelation, on which 'alone the ſacred writers build all our hopes 'of a future life; and it explains the uni-'form language of the ſcriptures, which 'ſpeak of one day of judgment for all man-'kind, and repreſent all the rewards of vir-'tue, and all the puniſhments of vice, as 'taking place at the awful day, and not be-

fore

'fore. This doctrine of a reſurrection was 'laughed at by the conceited Athenians, and 'will always be the ſubject of ridicule to 'perſons of a ſimilar turn of mind: but it 'is abundantly confirmed to us by the well-'atteſted reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, and 'and the promiſes of the goſpel, eſtabliſhed 'on all the miraculous events by which the 'promulgation of chriſtianity was attend-'ed *(x)*.'

Give me leave to recommend to your peruſal the xiith ſection of this work of Dr. Prieſtley's, from which the above citation is made, as affording you ſuch juſt, ſublime, and affecting conceptions of the deity, as are rarely to be found.

In bringing theſe charges againſt Dr. Prieſtley, and his opinions, which we have been examining, and putting every thing in the moſt invidious light, Dr. Horne has not conſidered, how open he is to a retort of the like kind, were any diſpoſed to make it.

Suppoſe

(x) Diſquiſitions relating to matter and ſpirit, p. 102.

Suppoſe now other perſons ſhould begin, as he has ſet the example, p. 16, 17, &c.

Marvellous and moſt degrading, Sir, to us appears your doctrine concerning the ever-bleſſed, omnipotent, all-perfect creator; and moſt painful to reflect upon:

That HE, the eternal, who was before all things, was born in time, of a jewiſh virgin, 1787 years ſince, after having lain nine months in the ſtate of an embrio in the womb of his mother:

That HE, the ſource of all wiſdom and power, from being a puling, ſenſeleſs babe, acquired ſtrength and knowlege, by degrees:

That after having ſerved an apprenticeſhip to his father, Joſeph, at the trade of a carpenter, HE who giveth all things to all, worked at that trade himſelf, for a livelihood:

That HE, who filleth the univerſe with his preſence, lay concealed for twenty ſix years at leaſt, in an obſcure town in Judea, and was conſidered all the time by all that knew him, as nothing more than a fellow-mortal:

That

That HE, whom the apoſtle juſtly ſtiles, ο μακαριος, *the happy*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 15. a being of the moſt perfect happineſs, was ſubject to hunger and thirſt, and pain and ſuffering; was abuſed, inſulted, and ſpit upon;

And HE, *the living* God, at laſt put to death by his own creatures.

The reſt of the incredible ſtory (*y*), the enemies of the goſpel will dilate upon with pleaſure.

(*y*) Voltaire has done it, in his Epître á Uranie, which begins,

Long tems vil œuvrier, le rabot à la main, &c. &c.

But perhaps it is no where more fully ſeen, what advantage is given to the adverſaries of the goſpel, by maintaining the doctrine of the trinity, and Jeſus to be the ſupreme God, than in a jewiſh tract intitled Nizzachon vetus, publiſhed in 1680, and written, as the editor with great probability points out, in the 12th century. In this there are many miſtakes concerning our chriſtian ſcriptures, and much unworthy abuſe and groundleſs calumny; but ſuch arguments are urged againſt the goſpel, on the ſuppoſition of Chriſt being the moſt high God, as cannot be confuted. A believer of a trinity in unity would not find it eaſy to make a ſatisfactory reply to the following paſſage, which I give in the latin tranſlation; particularly to the jew's inquiry, who was all the time in heaven, and who it was that governed the world, when God was three days dead in the ſepulcre. 'Amplius quæram aliquid ex te, mi chriſtiane:

'Agedum

SECTION XIV.

Of Dr. Horne's *wrong interpretation of ſeveral paſſages of ſcripture.*

From the ſame concern for you, with which I believe Dr. Horne to have been influenced in his endeavours to divert you from the peruſal of Dr. Prieſtley's writings, I am ſolicitous to point out to you ſome miſtakes of his own: in the which if you follow

Agedum reſponde mihi. Tu affirmas filium natum eſſe ex viſceribus Mariæ; dic dum igitur num pater et filius immundus, juxta cum filio, an vero ſolus filius in ventre delituerit? Si dicas ſolum ibi fuiſſe filium, quæſo annon ipſa ſe mutuo deſtruunt verba tua? cum contendas divinitatis perſonas nulla unquam ratione a ſe invicem poſſe divelli. Quod ſi dicas tres in utero extitiſſe, atque ibi fuiſſe nutritos; neceſſe eſt concedas, quod etiam tres cum hominibus verſati ſint, ac tres fuerint ſuſpenſi. Quis vero toto illo tempore in cœlis erat? quoniam diviſionem nullam admittunt. Quis item per id triduum quo ſepulti erant, orbem gubernabat, cum nemo ex iis aut in cœlo, aut in terris degeret.'

Nizzachon vetus, p. 152.

follow him, he may miſlead you moſt capitally, eſpecially with regard to the Being you are to worſhip.

My remarks will be confined to ſome of the proofs which he alleges, in two of the diſcourſes of his firſt volume, in ſupport of the doctrine of the trinity, and the divinity of Chriſt; and to the extraordinary manner, in which, in another work, he interprets the ſcriptures, and exemplifies his full belief of Jeſus being the moſt high God, by addreſſing prayer to him.

In his firſt diſcourſe, vol. i. p. 9, 10, &c. upon the text, Gen. i. 26, *God ſaid, let* US *make man in* OUR *own image*, &c. taking in alſo, Gen. xi. 7. he remarks; 'Theſe '*plural* forms, thus uſed by the deity, de-'mand our attention. Three ſolutions of 'the queſtion have been offered.'

He then rejects the ſolution given by the jews, that God ſpeaks to his angels; becauſe, as he imagines, it would ſuppoſe, that the angels were coadjutors with him in the creation. This however the language by

no means neceſſarily implies. And the interpretation is rendered the more probable, as the Almighty is repreſented as attended with angels, in all the divine appearances on earth. It ſeems alſo to be confirmed as being an antient jewiſh opinion, from Job xxxviii. 7. *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the earth?—when the morning ſtars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy?* (z)

Another ſolution, that God is introduced, ſpeaking after the manner of kings, and great perſonages, Dr. Horne alſo refuſes, though not for any valid reaſon, as it ſhould ſeem; *viz.* for it being unworthy of God to borrow language from men; when in fact it is univerſally the caſe in

(z) [*The morning ſtars.*] 'They are ſtiled *the ſons of God* in the next ſentence. The *ſons of God* are the angels, Job, i. 6. ii. 1. I ſuppoſe they are called the *morning ſtars*, on account of the luminous vehicles wherewith they are clothed. The morning ſtar is exceedingly bright. What a grand appearance does the poet here preſent to our view, ten thouſand times ten thouſand and thouſand of thouſands of glittering angels attending the birth of our world, and ſinging Hallelujas to the Almighty Father.' Scott's book of Job in engliſh verſe, with remarks, &c.

in our ſacred books, and one does not well ſee how the divine Being could otherwiſe make himſelf intelligible to mortals.

The real ſtate of the matter however is, that there is no myſtery in it, one way or other; no ground to think that Moſes's language was inſpired, but that he expreſſed things in the way he judged beſt, and varied his expreſſions in this ſort, for the greater ſolemnity, as man was the nobleſt work of God, when he came to ſpeak of his creation.

Let us now hear, what Dr. Horne has to offer himſelf upon the point.

'What then ſhould hinder us, proceeds 'he, from accepting the third ſolution, 'given by the beſt expoſitors antient and 'modern, (*N. B.* the *beſt* only according 'to *his* ideas) and drawn from this conſider-'ation, that in *the unity of the divine eſſence* '*there is a plurality of perſons coequal and* '*coeternal*, who might ſay, with truth and 'propriety, *Let* us *make man*; and *man is* '*become like one of* us? Of *ſuch a perſonality*, 'revelation informs us; it is that upon 'which the economy of man's redemption 'is founded; his creation, as well as that

'of the world, is, in different paſſages, at-
'tributed to the Father, to the Son, and to
'the Holy Spirit; what more natural there-
'fore than that at his production, this
'form of ſpeech ſhould be uſed by the
'divine perſons? What more rational than
'to ſuppoſe, that a doctrine ſo important
'to the human race, was communicated
'from the beginning, that men might know
'whom they worſhiped, and how they ought
'to worſhip? What other good and ſuffi-
'cient reaſon can be given, why the name
'of God, in uſe among believers from the
'firſt, ſhould likewiſe be in the *plural* num-
'ber, connected with verbs and pronouns in
'the *ſingular?*

Remarks.

1. I put in the margin an obſervation (*a*) of Dr. Croft, in his late ſermons at the Bampton-

(*a*) 'Perhaps too much ſtreſs is laid upon the expreſſions, Gen. i. 26. *Let us make man in* our *image.* The plural is frequently applied to one only: and the language of conſultation is evidently uſed in condeſcenſion to human infirmity. With the ſame kind of condeſcenſion, we are told

Bampton-lecture; that this *plural* way of ſpeaking is not a proper foundation upon which to build a plurality of perſons, co-equal, and coeternal, in the unity of the divine eſſence, as Dr. Horne aſſerts; we may therefore, conſidering the foregoing better ſolutions of the phraſeology, diſmiſs this firſt argument of his, as having nothing at all in it.

told, Gen. xviii. 20, 21. that *the* LORD *ſaid*; *becauſe the cry of Sodom and Gomorrha is great, and becauſe their ſin is very grievous, I will go down now and ſee, whether they have done according to the cry of it, which is come unto me*; *and if not, I will know.* It is dangerous to reſt an article of faith upon that, which may be only a mere idiom.'—Sermons in the year 1786, at the Bampton-lecture, by Dr. Croft.

I would obſerve to you here, by the way, that Juſtin Martyr, a heathen philoſopher and convert, one of the firſt who corrupted the ſcriptures by bringing in his heathen fancies of a ſecond God, inferior to the one ſupreme, and making Chriſt to be that ſecond God; introduces Chriſt here, Gen. i. 26. as the perſon to whom God ſpoke: and makes *him* the perſon that went down to Sodom and Gomorrha, and *not* the creator of the univerſe. See Dial. cum. Tryph. p. 153. 159. Ed. Benedict. Hagæ Comitum, 1742.

2. With reſpect to the argument which he would deduce from the plural termination of one of the hebrew names of God, Elohim or Aleim, in favour of a plurality of perſons in the deity, you can have nothing more ſatisfactory in confutation of it, than what is advanced by Dr. Prieſtley, in a maſterly, original manner, in his reply to Mr. Parkhurſt, at the end of the volume which contains his letters to Dr. Horne, and to yourſelves.

But as Dr. Kennicott has ſtained his noble work, by giving countenance to this weak argument for the doctrine of the trinity, from the plural noun, *elohim*, being joined with a verb in the ſingular number, in the 48th page of his general diſſertation prefixed to his hebrew bible: I ſhall give you an extract of what a moſt valuable perſon, lately deceaſed, and a maſter of biblical learning, has remarked in reply to him (*b*).

'Let

(*b*) Exodus; a corrected tranſlation, with notes, by William Hopkins, B. A. Vicar of Bolney, and Maſter of the Grammar ſchool of Cuckfield, Eſſex, p. 149.

'Let the doctor's premiſes be allowed, ſays Mr. Hopkins; let all the verbs through the bible, when the true God is denoted by *Elohim*, be granted to be uſed in the ſingular number, I abſolutely deny the argument deduced from hence, to prove a plurality and unity in the divine being: or, to expreſs it in the language of the Athanaſian creed, *One God in trinity, and trinity in unity*.

'But to conſider more particularly the nature of the argument, on which the learned doctor ſeems to lay ſo great a ſtreſs; let it be obſerved, that nothing certain can be concluded from the hebrew word *Elohim* being plural, in favour of a plurality of perſons in the godhead, becauſe all languages have words in the plural number of a ſingular ſignification.

'With regard to *Elohim*, it unqueſtionably in many inſtances ſignifies *one* perſon, ſo that no argument can be drawn from it, as neceſſarily ſignifying more perſons than *one*.

'And as the word *Elohim* has confeſſedly a plural termination, though often uſed in a ſingular ſenſe, it is no wonder that the

ſacred writers ſhould apply a plural verb to *Elohim*, when uſed of *falſe* gods, and a ſingular verb when uſed of the *one* true God; which is certainly done with the ſtricteſt propriety.

'The *greek* tranſlation of the bible, which was made near 300 years before our Saviour's time, always uſes the word *God*, (*Theos*,) which anſwers to *Elohim* in the hebrew, in the ſingular number, when it ſignifies the *one* true God. The ſame may be ſaid of the *Syriac* tranſlation, which was made ſoon after the days of the apoſtles, from the beginning of the Old, to the end of the New Teſtament.

'Our bleſſed Saviour was ſo far from blaming the jews for their uſing the word *Elohim* to ſignifiy ONE perſon, that he has expreſsly confirmed that ſenſe by his own authority, John viii. 54. xviii. 3, with many other paſſages to the ſame purpoſe. Accordingly, every penman of the New Teſtament, from the beginning to the end, conſtantly uſes the word *Theos*, which anſwers to *Elohim* in the hebrew, in the ſingular number, or to ſignify *one* perſon, when it is uſed

uſed of the one true God. And who the *perſon* intended by GOD is, appears (not to mention ſeveral hundred paſſages to the ſame purpoſe) from the unanſwerable words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. viii. 6. *though there be that are called* gods, *whether in heaven or on earth—yet to us there is but one God,* (*Theos or Elohim*) even the *Father, of whom are all things, and we by him; and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all things, and we by him.*

On ſuch weak grounds of an *idiom of ſpeech* merely, and on the miſtaken meaning, and conſtruction of an hebrew word, does Dr. Horne's trinity of the Old Teſtament ſtand. And yet on this, which is a non-entity, he ſays, the economy of man's ſalvation is founded: on this, he aſſerts, that the human race, from the beginning, worſhiped ſuch a trinity as he himſelf worſhips; and that, the God of Adam, (p. 13) of 'Noah, and of Abraham, conſiſted of three 'perſons, the Father, the Son, and the 'Holy Ghoſt.' When the foundation is thus of ſand, the fabric muſt give way and fall.

In

In his viith diſcourſe (p. 191 of the ſame vol.) upon John i. 14. *The word was made fleſh*, &c. he immediately obſerves, that in the exordium of his goſpel, John 'firſt 'publiſhes, ver. 1. the divinity, and then, 'here, the incarnation of his moſt adora-'ble and beloved maſter.'

But the real fact is, that he publiſhes neither the one, nor the other; being, as I truſt you will eaſily be able to ſee, an abſolute ſtranger to both.

In going on to prove, that Chriſt is the *word* ſpoken of in the firſt verſe of John's goſpel, our author is equally unfortunate, as he has appeared above, in miſtaking the language of the Old Teſtament. For he aſſerts, p. 195, "that the *word of* 'Jehovah, is frequently and evidently the 'ſtile *of a perſon*, who is ſaid, *to come*, *to be* 'be revealed or manifeſted, and the like. As 'in Gen. xv. 1. 4. *after theſe things*, the 'word of (Jehovah) the LORD came *unto* 'Abraham *in a viſion*, *ſaying*, *fear not*, 'Abra-

'*Abraham! I am thy ſhield, and thy ex-*
'*ceeding great reward. And Abraham ſaid,*
'LORD God, *what wilt thou give me*, &c.'

But you will eaſily perceive that the *word of the* LORD came to Abraham here, only in the ſame way, that *the word of God came* to John, Luke iii. 2, in the wilderneſs. In neither caſe are we to underſtand, that a perſon different from God, called the word of God, or the word of the LORD appeared to them; but by the term *word*, we are to underſtand a meſſage, or revelation that was given to them, and the perſon who ſpoke to Abraham was Jehovah, God, the Divine Being himſelf; and if Luke had entered into the particulars of the divine meſſage to John, he would have told us, that it was God who ſpoke to him. So that it is mere prepoſſeſſion, and ignorance of the phraſeology of ſcripture, that makes any one imagine Chriſt to be the word of the LORD that ſpoke to Abraham.

Our author's next proof of Chriſt being the *word* ſpoken of in the entrance of John's goſpel, is, p. 196. The LORD (or *Jehovah*)

vah) *revealed himſelf to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the* LORD (or of *Jehovah.*) 1 Sam. iii. 21.

It pities one to ſee ſuch inattention to the proper meaning of ſcripture-language. Our author here again builds the doctrine of Chriſt being the *word*, and conſequently, in his idea, the moſt high God, upon a pure idiom of the hebrew language; which, you may truly ſay, juſt as much proves Dr. Horne as Chriſt to be the moſt high God; *i. e.* it is applicable to neither. For the repetition of the noun itſelf in the ſame ſentence, inſtead of uſing the pronoun, is very frequent in the ſacred writings. Gen. xix. 24. *Thus the* LORD *rained upon Sodom brimſtone and fire, from the* LORD *out of heaven.* See Exod. xvi. 7. xvii. 16, &c. &c. And ſo the LORD *revealed himſelf to Samuel by the word of the* LORD, *i. e.* by himſelf, in a more particular extraordinary manner than to others ſince the time of Moſes: which is biſhop Patrick's explanation, without any ſuch myſterious meaning as Dr. Horne would make out of it.

Another

Another great miſtake of Dr. Horne's, reſpecting the Old Teſtament, is, where he ſays, p. 198. 'that our Saviour is ſtiled Je-'hovah, a name appropriated to the deity.' Such an affirmation ought not ſurely to have been made without ſome proof of it given or referred to. But leſt you ſhould imagine there is ſomething in it, as coming from a perſon of ſo great reputation as a divine, I ſhall produce and examine the paſſages of the Old Teſtament, uſually brought to prove Chriſt to be Jehovah, the ſelfexiſtent, eternal God.

Jeremiah xxiii. 6. *In his days Judah ſhall be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely: and this is his name whereby he ſhall be called,* The LORD *(or Jehovah) our righteouſneſs.*

But the words of the prophet are falſely tranſlated in our engliſh verſion, as a learned man hath obſerved, whoſe remarks will be recited at length, in the laſt part of this work; and we ſhould read them thus: *and this is the name by which Jehovah ſhall call him, our righteouſneſs.*

The late biſhop Lowth's father, who adopts this opinion, has this note upon the paſſage.

'He

'He (Chriſt) ſhall really be what the title 'imports; he ſhall be JEHOVAH, or the 'true GOD. The title of Jehovah, adds 'Mr. Lowth, is elſewhere given to the 'Meſſias by the prophets.' See Iſaiah xl. 10. 'xlviii. 17. Hoſ. i. 7. Zech. ii. 10, 11. 'Malachi iii. 1.' Of theſe we ſhall take a brief view to ſee what they yield.

Iſa. xl. 10. Behold the LORD (or *Jehovah) God will come with a ſtrong hand.* It is an uſual expreſſion, that the Almighty is ſaid to come to men, when he ſends his prophets. And at the firſt preaching of the goſpel, to which Iſaiah here refers, Jehovah did come by Jeſus the prophet of Nazareth, his choſen meſſenger to men. So that the paſſage affords no proof that Chriſt was Jehovah, but only his prophet.

—— xlviii. 17. *Thus ſaith the* LORD, (Jehovah) *thy redeemer, the holy one of Iſrael; I am the* LORD, (Jehovah) *thy God.* There is nothing here that belongs to Chriſt. The titles of ſaviour, and redeemer, at all times belong primarily to God; and to Chriſt only in a ſubordinate ſenſe.

Hoſea

Hoſea i. 7. *But I will have mercy on the houſe of Judah, and will ſave them by the* LORD *their God.* i. e. will ſave them by myſelf: the noun repeated, as above, inſtead of the pronoun. Chriſt is not at all concerned here.

Zechariah ii. 10, 11. *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midſt of thee, ſaith the* LORD, (Jehovah) *and many nations ſhall be joined to the* LORD *in that day, and ſhall be my people, and I will dwell in the midſt of them, and thou ſhalt know that the* LORD *of hoſts hath ſent me unto thee.*

The former part of this paſſage, if it be ſpoken of the times of the goſpel, relates to the extraordinary divine powers given to Chriſt and his apoſtles: but the laſt ſeem to be the words of the angel, mentioned in the begining of the chapter, declaring, that they ſhould be fully convinced, that the extraordinary hand of divine providence was concerned in bringing about thoſe events. Mr. Lowth, I ſuppoſe, would have them to ſignify, that one Jehovah, one eternal God had ſent another eternal God.

Malachi

Malachi iii. 1. *Behold I will ſend my meſſenger, and he ſhall prepare the way before me; (and the Lord, whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſuddenly come to his temple) even the meſſenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: behold, he ſhall come, ſaith* LORD *of hoſts.*

Here is a deſcription of Chriſt's coming, but no proof of his being Jehovah. The *Lord* here ſpoken of, *Adon*, is almighty God himſelf, whoſe alone the temple was; and which Chriſt calls (Matth. xii. 4.) *the houſe of God*, and John ii. 16.) *my Father's houſe.*

You hence learn, how little you can depend upon the beſt commentators, and moſt learned men. That accompliſhed ſcholar, and ſon of this worthy commentator, biſhop Lowth, lately deceaſed, has given into an almoſt incredible weakneſs, in his valuable new verſion of, and commentary on Iſaiah, as I have pointed out in *(c)* another place; in making the *threefold* repetition of the word *holy*, in the hymn of the angelic beings, Iſa. vi. 3. to be a *demonſtration of the myſtery of*

(c) Examination of Mr. Robinſon of Cambridge's plea for the divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. p. 98.

of the trinity in the divine unity. This I take the preſent opportunity of repeating, leſt ſuch names as his, ſhould overſway your judgments.

More extraordinary ſtill, is what immediately follows in Dr. Horne, where he produces, *I am alpha and omega, the firſt and the laſt*, Rev. i. 11. as a proof of Chriſt being the moſt high God; and to corroborate it, ſays; 'Upon this paſſage, which is 'found Rev. i. 11, Dr. Doddridge has the 'following note: "that theſe titles (which 'occur juſt above in ver. 8. *(t)*) ſhould be 'repeated ſo ſoon in a connection which de-'monſtrates they are given to Chriſt, will 'appear very remarkable, whatever ſenſe be 'given to the 8th verſe. The argument 'drawn in the preceding note upon it, would 'have been ſtrong, wherever ſuch a paſſage 'as this had been found: but its immediate 'connection with this, greatly ſtrengthens 'it. And I cannot forbear recording it, 'that this text has done more than any other 'in

(t) The 8th verſe is. *I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the ending, ſaith the Lord; which is, and which was, and which is to come.*

'in the bible, towards preventing me from 'giving into that ſcheme, which would 'make our Lord Jeſus Chriſt no more than 'a deified creature.'

Thus we have here a confeſſion, that this paſſage was what principally contributed to make this celebrated preſbyterian divine regard Chriſt as the moſt high God, and not a creature; and it is brought in by the dean of Canterbury as what confirms him in the ſame belief.

But unluckily for them, this paſſage, on which they both build ſo much, is a nullity; owing to inadvertence, or a deſigned interpolation of ſome tranſcriber, and not from the pen of the ſacred writer.

One wonders, that the proofs exhibited by Mill, and Bengelius, of the ſpuriouſneſs of this paſſage, had no effect on Dr. Doddridge. But Dr. Horne's inattention is more extraordinary, who has had an opportunity of knowing what has been further produced to ſhew that it is not genuine, by Wetſtein, and Grieſbach. This laſt moſt learned man, though himſelf a believer in the trinity and the divinity of Chriſt, has had the

the courage and integrity, in his valuable edition of the Greek N. Teſtament, to leave out this paſſage, as alſo the ſpurious text of the three witneſſes, 1 John v. 7. as not being any part of ſcripture. I put Wetſtein's and Grieſbach's authorities relating to it in the *(g)* margin, whence you ſee that the paſſage on which Dr. Horne builds ſo much, is not in the Alexandrian, Vatican, and royal Pariſian manuſcript-copies of the New Teſtament, nor in ſeveral others; that it has no place in ſeveral of the moſt ancient verſions of the New Teſtament; and on theſe accounts has been very properly omitted in ſeveral printed editions of the Greek Teſtament.

Dr. Horne is no leſs in error in affirming Chriſt to be the *word* ſpoken of in the pre-

(g) "AC 2. 4. 8. 9. 10. 11. 13. 14. 17. 18. 19. 25 '26. 27. 28. Editio *Complut. Plantin. Genev. Bengelii.* 'Verſio *Vulg. Syr. Copt. Armen. Æthiop. Arethas. An-* 'dreas. probante *J. Millio.*' Wetſtein in loc.

'ABC. 2. 9. 10. 14. al. 13. Ed. Syr. (non Ari.) 'Copt. Æth. Arm. Vulg. Areth. Andr. MS. Primas.' Grieſbach.

face of John's goſpel, and as ſuch, the ſupreme God. For this term, logos, *word*, might more properly be tranſlated, *reaſon*, *wiſdom*; and it is not here (nor indeed any where) *(q)* a name of Chriſt, but an attribute of God, his wiſdom; and God is thus denominated by his wiſdom, his word, or power; which is a phraſe of ſpeech very frequent with the hebrews, the word of the LORD, the word of God, the wiſdom of God, ſignifying God himſelf. And ſo in Proverbs viii. Solomon ſpeaks of wiſdom as a perſon that was with God before and when he created the world; intending thereby only to ſignify in a more lively animated manner, that God made all things and governs them by the moſt perfect wiſdom.

But

(q) A controverſial writer of the times, having aſſerted, that "in Rev. xix. 13. Chriſt is termed the *word* of God; and that every one knows, that he is more frequently ſo ſtiled in the unconteſted writings of St. John than elſewhere." Dr. Lardner remarks: "Though Mr. Twells ſays, *every one* knows this; I muſt entreat him to make an exception for me, till ſomebody has ſhewn me the ſeveral texts of St. John's unconteſted writings, where Chriſt is ſo called: for, at preſent, I do not know one."

Lardner's Credibility, p. ii. vol. iv. p. 71.

But in the ſecond part of this work, you will find this proem of John's goſpel, or what he ſays as from himſelf, in the beginning of his goſpel, not to be deſcriptive of Chriſt, but of almighty God himſelf, as the ſole creator of all things, and diſpenſer of light and knowlege, in different ways, and at different times, to his creatures, but laſt of all, in the fulleſt manner, by Jeſus Chriſt.

The word, proceeds the apoſtle, ver. 14. (i. e. not Chriſt, but the divine wiſdom), *was made*, or *was a man*, a mortal creature: for that is the meaning of the term *fleſh* (*s*)

 here;

(*s*) *Fleſh* is put for man as mortal. Pſ. lx. v. 2. Iſ. xl. 5, 6. Matt. xxiv. 22. Gal. ii. 16. See alſo John xvii. 2. 1 Cor. i. 29, &c. &c. The language therefore commonly uſed, viz. God *incarnate*, the word *incarnate*, the *incarnation* of Chriſt, is as groſs and diſguſting, as it is wholly unſcriptural; as if the Divine Being, or Chriſt conſidered as the firſt of angelic beings, were ſhut up in a caſe of fleſh and blood. Such unwarranted expreſſions therefore, however venerable for their antiquity, ought to be given up. St. Paul declares moſt diſtinctly, 1 Cor. xv. *Fleſh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Dr. Horne however, ſuch are his prejudices, ſends the Almighty himſelf to heaven, clothed in fleſh and blood. 'God *incarnate*, (ſays he) is gone up into 'that holy place not made with hands; the everlaſting doors 'of heaven are opened for the king of glory to enter, and 'repoſſeſs his antient throne,' &c. Comment. on Pſalm xlvii. 5.

here; and ſo, to avoid a harſh ambiguity to common readers, it would be better to tranſlate it. If you want to have this explained, the apoſtle goes on to do it for you. *The word,* ſays he, or wiſdom *was made,* or *was* (fleſh) *a man, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the well-beloved of the father, full of grace and truth:* i. e. The divine wiſdom was in the man Chriſt Jeſus, and by him dwelt among us; being communicated to him in a degree never before communicated to mortals: *and we* (his apoſtles) *ſaw his glory,* were witneſſes of the extraordinary gifts of a divine power beſtowed upon him; *the glory as of the well-beloved of the Father*; i. e. ſuch high divine communications as beſpoke him to be moſt highly approved by, and beloved of the ſupreme Father of all.

In the ſame diſcourſe, p. 204, Dr. Horne ſays; 'The apoſtle to the hebrews, writing 'on the ſubject of *the incarnation,* thus 'expreſſeth himſelf, *he taketh not hold of 'angels, but he taketh hold of the ſeed of 'Abraham*;

'*Abraham*; i. e. he took or aſſumed the 'manhood into God.'

One is concerned to ſee ſuch an intire want of attention to the real meaning of the ſcripture, and right interpretation of it. For ſo far is the apoſtle from writing here upon the ſubject of the *incarnation*, that there is nothing that indicates that he had ever any idea of ſuch a thing in his mind here, or any where. What may be ſuppoſed to have led Dr. Horne into ſuch a miſtake, is his implicitly following our very wrong engliſh tranſlation of this and the foregoing verſe, which a ſcholar and one that undertakes to teach truth to others ſhould not have done. I have put our common engliſh and the true verſion in the margin (*w*) in oppoſite columns; from

 which

(*w*) Heb. ii. 14.

Common Verſion.	True Verſion.
Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame.	*Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf* in like manner was a partaker of the ſame.
For verily he took not on him the nature *of angels; but he* took on him *the ſeed of Abraham.*	*For verily he* helpeth *not angels; but he* helpeth *the ſeed of Abraham.*

which you will perceive that the apoſtle is ſo far from treating of what Dr. Horne calls the *incarnation*, that he in expreſs words aſſerts, that Jeſus was a human creature, like all the reſt of us. I have alſo ſubjoined (*x*) Hardy's notes on the two verſes, to the ſame purpoſe, becauſe he generally favours the divinity of Chriſt in his interpretations, and therefore will be the leſs ſuſpected of partiality.

SECTION XV.

Of Dr. Horne's commentary on the pſalms.

Difficulty of the prophetic writings. A caution concerning them. Dr. Horne's *wrong method of interpretation. Various inſtances of it. Remarks on them.*

OUR author's other work, on which I am to make ſome obſervations, ſeems to have

(*x*) Ver. 14. *Ipſe ſimiliter particeps factus eſt eorundem*, i. e. mortalis homo, et miſeriis obnoxius. Ver. 16. λαμβανεσθαι proprie aliquem manu apprehendere, ſignificat, et hinc ad opitulationem ſignificandum commode transfertur.

have been a very popular one, from its having come to a third edition. But although compoſed by him with a good deſign, it is liable to vaſt objections, from his very wrong method of interpreting the ſcriptures, and from his drawing aſide and miſleading his readers, from the worſhip of the true God. It is intituled;

'A commentary on the book of pſalms.'

'*In which their literal or hiſtorical ſenſe, as they relate to king David, and the people of Iſrael, is illuſtrated*; *and their application to Meſſiah, to the church, and to individuals, as members thereof, is pointed out*; *with a view to render the uſe of the pſalter pleaſing and profitable to all orders and degrees of chriſtians.* By George Horne, D.D. &c.'

It is aſſuredly a moſt becoming employment for a divine, and doing a real ſervice to chriſtianity, to endeavour to illuſtrate ſuch of theſe ſacred hymns as contain prophecies of Chriſt, and really relate to him. But too much caution cannot be uſed upon a ſubject, where there is ſo great danger of being deluded by a warm imagination. And therefore in the interpretation of this part

of

of the ſacred writings, as indeed of all others whatſoever, we ſhould take it as a thing certain, that no writer has any more than one ſubject in his thoughts at a time to diſcuſs, and one ſenſe to be fixed to his words; (unleſs he himſelf, or ſome one properly authorized indicate the contrary:) and this one ſenſe, which his words plainly convey we are to find out by the help of juſt criticiſm, and adhere to and reſt in it.

This is acting in agreement with that golden rule of interpretation, as Moſheim well ſtiles it, vol. iv. p. 21. inculcated by Luther; viz. that *there is no more than one ſenſe annexed to the words of ſcripture, throughout all the books of the Old and New Teſtament.*

But Dr. Horne forſaking theſe wiſe cautions and directions from the firſt, and paying little regard to the plain and literal meaning of the pſalms, employs himſelf in exhibiting their ſecret meaning and reference to Chriſt, intirely as it ſhould ſeem from the fund of his own imagination: for he gives no proof that any ſuch myſtic ſenſe was intended by their reſpective writers. In this way of interpreta-

interpretation, by which any thing may be made out of any thing, he very eaſily finds, as may be ſuppoſed, all his own peculiar notions and doctrines, largely and continually diſplayed in theſe ſacred ſongs; whilſt others can diſcover nothing of the ſort, neither in them, nor throughout the whole bible.

It may be proper to produce a few examples of his manner and method.

In his comment on the firſt verſe of the firſt pſalm, he brings in at the end of it, the doctrine of imputed righteouſneſs as it is called, in a very ſingular manner, and though the words of the ſacred writer himſelf inculcate the contrary. *O thou ſecond Adam,* ſays Dr. Horne, *who alone, ſince the tranſgreſſion of the firſt, haſt attained a ſinleſs perfection; make thy ſervants* bleſſed, *by making them* righteous, *through thy merits and grace!*

Upon the firſt verſe of the ſixth pſalm, he thus teaches that ſtrange doctrine, ſubverſive of the moral attributes of the deity, the doctrine of vicarious puniſhment, and ſhews the innocent Jeſus appeaſing the anger

ger of the Father, by ſuffering for guilt not his own.

" Above, ſays he, is an angry God preparing to take vengeance; beneath, the fiery gulf ready to receive him; without him, a world in flames; within, the gnawing worm. Thus ſituated, he begins in extreme agony of ſpirit, *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure.* As often as we are led thus to expreſs our ſenſe of ſin, and dread of puniſhment, let us reflect on *him, whoſe righteous ſoul, indued with a ſenſibility peculiar to itſelf, ſuſtained the ſins of the world, and the diſpleaſure of the Father!*"

Pſ. xxxvii. 39, 40. *But the ſalvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their ſtrength in the time of trouble. And the Lord ſhall help them and deliver them: he ſhall deliver them from the wicked, and ſave them becauſe they put their truſt in him.* One wonders what could lead our author thus to paraphraſe, and addreſs this to Jeſus Chriſt. 'Of thee, O Lord Jeſu, is our ſalvation; be thou our ſtrength in this mortal life, which is a time of trouble; help us againſt our

our ſpiritual enemies, and deliver us from them; deliver us from the wicked one, and from all evil; and ſave us from the guilt and puniſhment thereof; becauſe we put our truſt in thee, and in thee alone."

Pſ. lxxii. 18, 19. *Bleſſed be the* LORD *God, the God of Iſrael, who only doth wondrous things. And bleſſed be his glorious name for ever and ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen.* Dr. Horne immediately proceeds in a very extraordinary manner to apply this paſſage to Chriſt. 'Bleſſed, therefore, ſays he, be thou, O Lord Jeſu; for *thou art the Lord God, even the God of Iſrael,* who haſt wrought ſuch miracles of mercy for the ſalvation of the church; and bleſſed by the tongues of men and angels be thy holy and glorious name; and let the whole earth be filled with the amazingly tranſcendent, and inconceivable majeſty of thy moſt excellent glory, for evermore! So be it."

Pſ. lxxviii. 38. *But being full of compaſſion, he forgave their iniquity, and deſtroyed them not, yea many a time turned he his anger away,* &c. Dr. Horne accomodates this

this to Jeſus Chriſt, as the God of the Iſraelites then, and the God of chriſtians now. 'Be not angry, ſays he, o Lord Jeſu, for ever, with them or with us; but remember of what materials we are made, and into what a ſtate we are fallen; how weak and how frail we are; remember this, o Lord, and forgive us; and teach us to remember it, that we may forgive one another."

Pſ. lxxxiv. 1. *How amiable are thy tabernacles, o* LORD *of hoſts.* 'How amiable then, (adds Dr. Horne) may the chriſtian ſay, are thoſe eternal manſions, from whence ſin and ſorrow are excluded; —— where thou, o bleſſed Jeſu, LORD *of hoſts*, king of men and angels, dwelleſt in glorious majeſty, conſtituting by thy preſence the felicity of thy choſen!"

Pſ. civ. 1. *Bleſs the* LORD, *o my ſoul: o Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majeſty*, &c.

'The ſcripture informs us, proceeds Dr. Horne, that the ſame perſon, who redeemed the world, did alſo create it. In the ciid pſalm, we are aſſured by St. Paul, to the *Son*, it is ſaid, *Thou, Lord, in the beginning*

ning haſt laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. To him, therefore, as creator, is the civth pſalm likewiſe addreſſed.'

Dr. Horne's reference here is to Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. But the attentive reader will find, that the author of the epiſtle does not apply the words of pſalm cii. 25. to Chriſt at all. But having mentioned the high dignity of Chriſt's office, and the benefits we derive from him, he inſtantly, in a way not unuſual with him, devoutly turns himſelf to God, from whom Chriſt, and all the bleſſings of the goſpel came, and applies the words of the pſalmiſt upon the occaſion, in acknowlegement of the divine power and goodneſs, and kind deſign to perpetuate thoſe bleſſings. See Emlyn's works, vol. ii. p. 340, 341.

Pſ. cxlv. 1, 2. *I will extol thee, my God, o king, and will bleſs thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bleſs thee, and I will praiſe thy name for ever and ever.* 'The ſame divine perſon, continues Dr. Horne, who was, in a particular manner, the *God* and *king* of Iſrael, now ſtandeth in thoſe relations

lations to the gentile chriſtian church, and by her is *extolled* in the words of this pſalm, originally compoſed and uſed for that purpoſe among the Iſraelites. Chriſt is our GOD, who hath ſaved us, according to his covenant and promiſe; he is our *king*, who, &c.

REMARKS.

Such and the like explanations and applications of the pſalms, which I have produced, and which make a large part of two volumes, you, who are unprejudiced, will at firſt ſight, perceive to be intirely foreign to the intent of the writers, and purely the fruits of lively imagination, and of the notions *(y)* with which

(y) In like manner, in pſalm cxix. 1. our author findeth the doctrine of original ſin; and ſadly marrs and mangles the beautiful affecting ſimplicity and piety of the pſalm throughout, by his ſpiritual chriſtian meanings thruſt upon it. To give one inſtance which the book opens upon.

Ver. 144. *The righteouſneſs of thy teſtimonies is everlaſting: give me underſtanding, and I ſhall live.* In every ſenſe, proceeds Dr. Horne, o Lord Jeſu, *thy righteouſneſs is everlaſting:*

with which Dr. Horne came prepoſſeſſed to the reading of them. As ſuch, they coſt no trouble, no expence of much thought or inquiry, but are rather a pious kind of amuſement; ſo that it is not to be wondered at that the doctor ſhould expreſs himſelf ſo delighted with the employment. And ſo far all would be very well, if his notions were confined to himſelf. But in the mean time, his rank in the univerſity, and the church, attract, and impoſe upon, readers, who never think or examine for themſelves; and who hold it a wonderful thing for a learned man to find out the goſpel preached even by David, in ſo large and particular a manner, as no one had ever heard of before: whilſt rational minds turn away from a ſyſtem of religion, ſo fanciful and precarious.

2. But the great point in which Dr. Horne will miſlead you, and all that implicitly

ing: grant me *the underſtanding* of it, in every ſenſe, and we ſhall live in thee now, and with thee for ever.

One is concerned to note, that many parts of this commentary on the pſalms conſiſt thus of *words without meaning.*

The hungry ſheep look up and are not fed.

implicitly follow him, is with reſpect to the God you are to worſhip.

It has been made, and it is, moſt apparent, that one ſingle perſon alone, is ſpoken of, and addreſſed in prayer, as GOD, throughout the ſacred writings, by patriarchs, prophets, by Moſes, by Jeſus Chriſt, and his apoſtles. Chriſt taught the heavenly Father, who was his father as well as of the reſt of mankind, to be the only true God. He worſhiped him and prayed to him himſelf, and directed his followers to pray to him; and never taught them that there was any other perſon who was God, or to be worſhiped.

Now in the face of this moſt glaring evidence to the contrary, Dr. Horne clothes our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt in the character of the moſt high God, which he was the fartheſt of all things from ever pretending to; prays to him perpetually; calls him God, LORD God, God of Iſrael, the LORD of hoſts; addreſſes him as poſſeſſed of all the attributes of the deity, and particularly of that of compaſſion and mercy.

3. This

3. This manner of praying to Jeſus Chriſt as God, the LORD God, LORD of hoſts, God of Iſrael, certainly makes two Gods, two LORD Gods, two LORDS of hoſts, two Gods of Iſrael, unleſs the God and Father of Jeſus Chriſt and of us all, is to be excluded from being God, LORD God, LORD of hoſts, God of Iſrael. And although Dr. Horne's prejudices and ſubtle metaphyſical diſtinctions, may prevent his perceiving, that he thus introduces, and acknowleges, and worſhips, two Gods; I cannot ſuppoſe that you yourſelves could pray to Jeſus Chriſt in theſe characters, and dreſſed in theſe attributes, and then invoke the heavenly Father in the ſame way, and by the ſame characters, and not be moſt fully perſuaded that you were praying to two Gods. But you know, that this is forbidden and condemned by the higheſt authority in the univerſe; I AM JEHOVAH THY GOD; *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but* ME.

4. What a ſcene of inexplicable confuſion and perplexity is here introduced! According to Dr. Horne, the chriſtian world has hitherto been miſtaken, in imagining,

for inſtance, the pſalms civth, cxlvth, to be addreſſed to the ſingle perſon of Jehovah, the LORD God, God of Iſrael, who made the world. For the doctor finds theſe titles to belong to Jeſus Chriſt, and affirms him to be the object, in whoſe honour theſe hymns were compoſed, and who is invoked in them.

How then ſhall we direct our thoughts? you will naturally inquire. To whom ſhall we turn ourſelves in ſinging theſe divine ſongs? whoſe praiſes are we to celebrate? Are we to lift up our hearts to Jeſus, and to exclude the heavenly Father, declared by Jeſus to be the only true God? Or has Dr. Horne any rule to give us, when we are to addreſs our devotions to the one, when to the other? what pſalms belong to the one, what to the other?

5. You cannot but remark, what a blemiſh is hereby fixed upon the goſpel, and ſtumbling block thrown before thoſe who reject it, that after a period of near 2000 years, when it's founder, the holy Jeſus, gave his ſanction to the deciſion of his predeceſſor, Moſes, the divine law-giver of the

jews

jews (*t*) (Deut. vi. 4. Mark xii. 29. 32.) that Jehovah, their God, was one Jehovah;

(*t*) I cannot here forbear citing a very ſerious and ſolemn remonſtrance upon this moſt important object, by a late eminent miniſter of the church eſtabliſhed, Mr. Hopkins, above-mentioned; eminent for thoſe virtues which will highly diſtinguiſh and promote him in the future world, though his condition and circumſtances here, were always low and narrow, and particularly at the cloſe of his long, laborious, uſeful life.

In his note on Exodus xx. 3. after having remarked, that the chriſtian lawgiver, our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, had eſtabliſhed by his expreſs authority the ſolemn declaration of Moſes, Deut. vi. 4. by adopting and reinforcing his very words, concerning the divine unity, he proceeds to ſay: 'By what rightful authority have the greateſt mortals determined, that there are two other perſons equally intitled to honour, worſhip, and glory with the one Supreme God, and that they, together with him, form one Supreme Being? A doctrine abſolutely inconſiſtent with the principles of reaſon, and expreſsly contrary to above two thouſand texts in the Old Teſtament, and above a thouſand in the New, (I ſpeak upon examination) which either ſtrongly ſet forth, or neceſſarily imply, the *Unity* of God in the ſtrict literal ſenſe. I am afraid that the Athanaſian doctrine and worſhip ſeems little leſs than a breach of the covenant eſtabliſhed between God and the Jewiſh people in the Old Teſtament, and between God and all mankind in the New. The governors of the church ſhould be exhorted in the moſt earneſt manner, to take ſpeedy and effectual

it ſhould be the doctrine of all the great churches in chriſtendom, not excepting the proteſtant

fectual methods to review our public forms, and reduce them to the ſtandard of ſcripture. In the beginning of the litany, there are invoked FOUR diſtinct objects of religious worſhip; which form of worſhip has not the leaſt foundation, or even colour of evidence to ſupport it, from the beginning of the Old to the end of the New Teſtament: and the learned of all denominations are challenged to produce any acts of religious worſhip to FOUR diſtinct objects.'

'The Ten Commandments are read in the morning ſervice of all the churches of England and Ireland every Lord's day; and at the ſame time a doctrine and form of worſhip are kept up in expreſs contradiction to the firſt commandment.'

'Chriſtian profeſſors have often condemned the jews for their prejudices and blindneſs, that they do not ſee and acknowlege the Meſſiah, of whom there are ſo many clear prophecies delivered in their own ſcriptures. On the other hand the jews, I think, may with equal juſtice retort a ſimilar charge upon great numbers of profeſſed chriſtians, who though they are perpetually reading, or hearing read, the ten commandments, in the firſt of which God is declared to be one, in words not poſſible to be interpreted in any other ſenſe, yet in defiance to the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt light, they preſume to acknowlege and worſhip THREE co-equal Gods in one ſubſtance. If the New Teſtament really maintained this abſurd corrupt doctrine, it

proteſtant church of England, and particularly at this hour maintained by Dr. Horne, a diſtinguiſhed and approved dignitary in it; that the humble and pious Jeſus is Jehovah, Jehovah God, the Lord God, whom all are to worſhip; ſo that he is at the ſame time a worſhiper of God, and the God who is worſhiped. And you are thus, according to Dr. Horne, to worſhip a man-God, a creature-God, one acknowleged to have been like ourſelves, as the moſt high; inſtead of HIM, who is *inviſible, eternal, whom no one hath ſeen nor can ſee, who dwelleth in the light which no one can approach*: who hath ſaid, *To whom will ye liken me? and to whom*

it would be an unanſwerable argument that it never came from God, it being impoſſible that the two Teſtaments ſhould contradict each other in this grand fundamental article, the UNITY of God, on which all true religion is founded. But to our rational ſatisfaction, Moſes and Chriſt are fully agreed in maintaining this eſſential doctrine, as we have already ſeen; and it is the expreſs duty of all churches through every part of the globe, to remove all forms that break in upon the important point of the UNITY of God.

ſhall I be equaled (*u*). *I am Jehovah, and none elſe; beſide me there is no God*, If. xl. 25. xlv. 5.

6. In the midſt of the frequent devotional addreſſes, ſcattered throughout theſe two volumes of Dr. Horne's upon the pſalms, although beſides Jeſus Chriſt, there is another God often named; yet I have not obſerved one inſtance of prayer being offered up to that other God; but all to Jeſus Chriſt, who is ſtiled God, the LORD God, the LORD of hoſts, &c. This cannot but make deep impreſſion on you, and upon all thoſe who may be

(*u*) I AM *Jehovah, and none elſe: beſide* ME *there is no God.* This very circumſtance, *viz.* the uſe of the ſingular pronoun, whenever God *ſpeaks*, or *is addreſſed*, or *named*, is itſelf a full demonſtration, that there is but one ſingle perſon who is God, to the excluſion of Jeſus Chriſt, and of all others. There is no taking refuge here in a pretended reverence for God, and ſaying, that we ought not to pry with too curious eyes into the divine nature. For as the point in queſtion is confeſſed not to be knowable by nature's light, but to be of divine revelation, we muſt ſtudy the words which convey it to us, and examine them as we do the words of any other books; and they, we thus ſee, upon the face of them, and no leſs, on the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny, are found to teach the divine unity in the moſt abſolute ſenſe, that *there is one Jehovah, and his name one.* Zech. xiv. 9.

be inclined to put implicit faith in him, as a moſt learned man, and head of a college, and endanger your offering up your devotions to a man like yourſelves, as God almighty; eſpecially as he is repreſented full of mercy and goodneſs, and the contrary quality of anger is attributed to the other God ſpoken of in theſe commentaries.

From what ſource ſoever Dr. Horne derived this worſhip and practice, it is not certainly to be found in the bible, and therefore is moſt reprehenſible, if that ſacred book is to be regarded as our ſtandard and directory.

SECTION XVI.

The reply of the Students to Dr. Horne.

I HOPE now, ye virtuous youth, and diligent inquirers after truth, that it is not too much for me to preſume, that the foregoing arguments may have ſwayed ſo much with ſome of you at leaſt, that, in your turns, you would be diſpoſed to expreſs yourſelves to Dr. Horne, for his pamphlet and addreſs to Dr.

Dr. Prieſtley, in your names, in ſome ſuch manner as the following.

The ſtudents of Oxford *and* Cambridge, *to* Dr. Horne, *preſident of* Magdalen College, &c.

Hon. and Rev. Sir,

" We are extremely obliged to you for condeſcending to put on your undergraduate's gown for a while to ſerve us, and to preſerve us from what you apprehend to be hurtful and erroneous doctrine, which Dr. Prieſtley would teach us.

" But we think you much miſtaken, though we are perſuaded of your good intentions, in making us to ſay, that we think it right to declare our belief, that every thing contained in the liturgy and articles of our church is agreeable to the word of God, before we have inquired and examined, whether it be ſo, or not. And although it be the way, in which you began your own theological ſtudies, it is far from recommending itſelf to us on that account, as it ſeems to us to have had an unhappy influence

ence upon yourſelf, and your own improvements.

" We find alſo, that you have not mentioned ſome facts, which ſhould have been made known to us. For that ſo far are things from being rightly conſtituted with reſpect to our church's articles and liturgy, as you would make us believe, that ſome of the wiſeſt and beſt members of it, have wiſhed for, and endeavoured to promote a reformation in many things of great conſequence, and among theſe ſome of the learned men that are now upon the epiſcopal bench.

" We muſt conclude therefore, that the way of authority, and of ſubmitting to the deciſions of fallible men like ourſelves, in what concerns our holy religion, which you propoſe to us, is not the way of arriving at the truth, in the judgment of perſons of higher rank in the church than yourſelf; and we fear, that it has been the reaſon that for ſo many ages its progreſs has been retarded.

" So far then from thinking Dr. Prieſtley ſo much to be blamed as you would make him for having no fixed creed, we are conſtrained to think you yourſelf highly blameable for having fixed your creed in the manner

ner you have done, and for endeavouring to fix our's for us in the manner you do. On the contrary, we are convinced, that we ought never to have our opinions ſo unchangeable as you would make them, but to have our minds open to conviction, and to change of ſentiment, whenever we ſee reaſon for it.

" Although we do not diſlike mirth and drollery in its ſeaſon, and admire your talent in this reſpect, we do not think it a proper way of making reply to what is ſupported by reaſon and ſerious argument, and therefore we do not approve the application of it in the letter you have written to Dr. Prieſtley for us.

" For, whatever you imagine, we think it far from being a matter to be treated with levity, to ſearch and diſcover, as far as we can, who, and what is the Being that made us; to whom, it is, that we are to direct our prayers, and to depend upon. Whether we are to pray to three perſons, or to two perſons, or only to one? And alſo to procure all the ſatisfaction we can concerning the character of the God that made us, and

and the nature of his divine adminiſtration: whether he be, of himſelf, perfectly good, and merciful, and benevolent; and not ſtanding in need of another perſon to make him kind and forgiving to his frail, repenting creatures of mankind; which appears to be your opinion.

"You frequently accuſe thoſe that are called Socinians, of torturing the language of ſcripture, and ſtretching it to quite another meaning than the ſacred writers intended. But we fear this accuſation will recoil upon yourſelf. For it has been proved upon you, ſir, that you have not been ſufficiently attentive to acquaint yourſelf critically with the ſacred writings, as you would have done in order to interpret an ode of Horace, or a paſſage in Tacitus, or Thucydides. To this we cannot but attribute your having miſtaken ſo many texts in the bible, and particularly your having been ſo much overſeen in the ſenſe which you have put upon St. Paul's epiſtle to the hebrews.

"It is this want of a proper and critical ſtudy of the ſacred writings, that we fear, has made you intirely to overlook the true condition

dition and character of Jeſus Chriſt, ſo as to make him the ſupreme God, whilſt he ſeems ſo plainly and continually to declare himſelf, and is declared throughout the ſcriptures, to have been one of our race, and a mighty prophet and meſſenger of the great God.

" But, Sir, what moſt of all aſtoniſhes us, is your making Jeſus Chriſt to be the LORD God, LORD of hoſts, God of Iſrael, to whom the ſacred writers of the pſalms addreſſed themſelves. We cannot divine, how you can be ſatisfied in this, when there is not any the leaſt token or ſign of it to be gathered, from the book of pſalms, or any other of our ſacred books. How are we to reconcile this your praying only to Jeſus Chriſt, and calling him, God, LORD God, LORD of hoſts, &c. when Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, (John xvii. 3.) praying to the Father, calls him, THEE, *the only true God!* thereby, by the perſonal pronoun, confining the title intirely to one perſon? are we in contradiction to this, to worſhip two Gods? For ſurely we cannot exclude the Father from being the only true God. We wiſh to be relieved

relieved by you, Sir, out of this perplexity, into which you have thrown us."

We are &c. your obliged,

Poſtſcript.

Of Dr. Prieſtley's *hiſtory of early opinions concerning Jeſus Chriſt.*

HAVING omitted the mention of this work of Dr. Prieſtley's in its proper place, when recommending to you his theological writings, I ſhall take the preſent opportunity of ſaying ſomething of it, the moſt curious and valuable of them all: and I riſque nothing in adding, that it could only be executed in the manner it has been done, by a ſuperior genius, like his own; and alſo one, who to ſo much patient, unremitted induſtry, could add ſo many ingenious devices and mechanical arrangements to abridge his labour in ſorting the vaſt materials before him, ſo as to finiſh in a few years, what would have required very many in the ordinary way, without ſuch invention.

HERETOFORE, many chriſtians, who ſaw that there was no foundation in the ſcriptures

for

for the divinity of Chriſt, or for his being any thing more than a man with an extraordinary commiſſion and power from God, did not know what to make of ſome the earlieſt chriſtian writers embracing a contrary opinion, *viz.* of his having preexiſted, before he was born of his mother Mary, at Bethlehem in Judea.

This difficulty Dr. Prieſtley ſolved in a moſt ſatisfactory manner, in the former part of his '*Hiſtory of the corruptions of chriſtianity*;' by ſhewing, that this early unſcriptural doctrine concerning Chriſt, aroſe intirely from a few learned heathen converts, who mixed their philoſophy with the goſpel; and by proving alſo from authentic hiſtory, that the whole body of jewiſh chriſtians, converted by the apoſtles themſelves, did not believe either the divinity, or the preexiſtence of Jeſus Chriſt. From which it is indubitably to be inferred, that the apoſtles never taught ſuch a doctrine concerning Chriſt; as it is out of every degree and limit of probability, that they who had been taught by them, ſhould have ſo immediately deſerted their doctrine, upon a matter

matter ſo important. And he ſhewed this opinion to have been at firſt nearly univerſal among gentile as well as jewiſh chriſtians, theſe few philoſophizing men excepted.

He alſo pointed out by what ſteps theſe men were drawn on to make Jeſus Chriſt the ſupreme God; which, in the ſpace of three centuries, they accompliſhed: but could not, all the while, bring the bulk of chriſtians to accede to their doctrine, who continued to be unitarians, ſuch as the apoſtles themſelves, and the firſt converts to the goſpel.

This work of Dr. Prieſtley's, was not ſuffered to paſs without being controverted by ſeveral perſons, among whom Dr. Horſley, lately promoted to the ſee of St. David's, much diſtinguiſhed himſelf; though by no means to his credit with learned men, and judges of the ſubject. For perhaps there hardly ever was an inſtance, in which a controverſial writer, was ſo intirely baffled, and confuted in every thing advanced by him, both from ſcripture, and early antiquity, to invalidate Dr. Prieſtley's poſitions; as has been verified with reſpect to Dr.

Horſley. And this is the opinion of not a few among the learned, who are far from favouring Dr. Prieſtley's peculiar ſentiments. To form a true judgment yourſelves of the caſe, I would refer you to Dr. Prieſtley's Letters to Dr. Horſley, Archdeacon of St. Alban's, Part ii. and Part iii: to which, in point of honour, and for the ſake of truth, he ought to make a juſt reply; or to give up the cauſe, and own he cannot defend it.

In conſequence of this diſcuſſion of the ſubject with Dr. Horſley, yet not with a view to add to his triumphs over him, but for his own ſatisfaction, and that of others, the learned more eſpecially, Dr. Prieſtley undertook this his laſt herculean work (*a*). In this he has brought to light, and diſplayed a vaſt accumulation of evidence, unknown before, "to prove the truth and the antiquity, as he himſelf ſpeaks, of the proper unitarian doctrine, in oppoſition to the trinitarian and arian hypotheſes;" deriving his information from the firſt ſources only, having

(*a*) "The hiſtory of early opinions concerning Jeſus "Chriſt, compiled from original writers, proving that the "chriſtian church was at firſt unitarian, in four vols. 1786."

having peruſed all the original authors from the beginning, and produced almoſt 2000 paſſages from them; and having many others in reſerve, equally important, if needed, to eſtabliſh the facts for which he pleads.

Concerning however this large *field*, or more juſtly to ſpeak, this overgrown *wood* of chriſtian antiquity, which our author alone hath cleared up, and in which he hath made ſuch diſcoveries; I would beg leave to obſerve to you;

1. That before he led the way, we were all much in confuſion, and had no diſtinct ideas concerning that great corruption of the goſpel, and of genuine chriſtianity, called *Arianiſm*; I mean the doctrine which makes Jeſus Chriſt to have been a great preexiſtent ſpirit, next to the eternal God, and deriving his being from him; who condeſcended to come into this world of ours, and to animate a human body, ſhrunk from his original dignity and power, firſt into the ſtate of an embrio, next into that

of an helpleſs infant, till by degrees he became rational, &c. &c.

This doctrine, which has no countenance in the ſcriptures, but in a very few paſſages, of plainly wrong interpretation, Dr. Prieſtley has proved not to have been known in the chriſtian church, till about the time of *Arius*; and has likewiſe ſhewn that the doctrine of the platonic fathers concerning Chriſt, which probably firſt began with Juſtin Martyr, or about his time, and has been miſtaken for it, was quite another thing: Chriſt, according to them, not being a ſuperangelic ſpirit, animating a human body, but the logos, the wiſdom or reaſon of the divine being, his attribute, which theſe philoſophers made a perſon of, and which, according to them, bore the ſame relation to the Father, that the platonic νους, which was their ſecond principle, bore to the firſt principle, uſually called αγαθος; or rather were the ſame with them. This they held to be intimately united to Jeſus Chriſt, who was ſtill a man, in their ſyſtem, with a body and ſoul like the reſt of us. *(b)*

I muſt

(*b*) In the firſt ſection of the concluſion of The hiſtory of the early opinions concerning Jeſus Chriſt, vol. iv. p. 273, you,

I muſt own, that this wild, abſtracted perverſion of the true ſcripture-doctrine concerning Chriſt is to me leſs exceptionable, and leſs repugnant to reaſon, than the *arian* doctrine concerning him; which is a heap of incongruous, ſtaggering improbabilities, from beginning to end: whether you ſuppoſe the great preexiſtent ſpirit, which was ſhut up in a human body of fleſh and blood for 30 years, to have been the firſt and principal of created beings, and the ſubordinate creator of all things; or, one of an inferior claſs, with inferior powers.

2. *The diſtinction of the opinion of the early writers from that of the common people* was never before obſerved by any one; and being a thing wholly unknown to the firſt Socinians, they were exceedingly embaraſſed in the defence of their ſentiments, in point of antiquity. But we here ſee the ſeeming gap and chaſm filled up, and that the doctrine of the apoſtles concerning their divine

you have a clear and diſtinct account of the ſucceſſive gradations of this platonic doctrine, till it ended in making Chriſt the moſt high God.

divine maſter being altogether one of the human race, was alſo the doctrine of all thoſe that were immediately taught by and ſucceeded them, a few ſpeculative men excepted, who would be wiſe *above what was written.*

3. The variety of curious knowlege of facts and opinions, contained in this work; the illuſtrations of the oriental philoſophy; and the doctrine of Platoniſm in particular never ſo well exhibited before, muſt be pleaſing and inſtructive to all, who wiſh to know the hiſtory of the human mind, an intereſting hiſtory aſſuredly: ſo that throwing even the queſtion of religion aſide, it is a valuable acceſſion to the literary world, but connected with that important object, it is above all price.

In a work of ſuch compaſs and extent as this *hiſtory of early opinions concerning Jeſus Chriſt*, in which you have the words of the original writers themſelves, it was ſcarce to be expected that no miſtakes would be committed. The author foreſaw it to be unavoidable, and deſired all allowance to be made, and to be told his faults, and he would

would gladly correct them. They have however turned out much fewer than could have been imagined, and none of them in the leaſt affecting his main propoſitions and concluſions, though he has been told of them in an unhandſome way. But in whatever way it may come, it will be acceptable to him to hear of any errors or overſights, be they of greater or ſmaller conſequence. With reſpect to the unworthy inſinuations of ſome men, all that know any thing of Dr. Prieſtley, believe and are perſuaded, that he would as ſoon be guilty of robbing on the highway, as of deſignedly miſquoting or miſinterpreting any paſſage in an antient writer to deceive others, and ſerve the purpoſe of a private party or opinion. For he has no intereſt in view, but that of truth, nor any deſires but to have that in the beſt way promoted and eſtabliſhed.

F I N I S.

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